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AN
FANTRY COMPANY

J. F. Meek,

SECOND EDITION.

By

MAJOR E. KIRKPATRICK

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The TRAINING

OF AN

INFANTRY COMPANY

By

Major E. KIRKPATRICK, I.A.

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2ND EDITION.

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PREFACE

This booklet has not been written for the use and benefit of officers and non-commissioned officers of long experience and proved skill in the profession of training men for battle. To such as these it may only provide an object of criticism, for in the course of years spent in turning recruits into trained soldiers they will have formulated to themselves, and adopted, some system of training which they found productive of the best results under their own guidance. But there are many at present, and at a future time, should certain circumstances arise in the life of the nation, there may be very many more who may not have such stores of experience to draw on, and yet may be faced with the problem of rapidly converting an untrained or only partially trained body of men into a force capable of acting successfully in real war, both in attack and defence against trained and disciplined troops. Again, it is written, not for officers commanding battalions,

nor for officers of cavalry and artillery, but only for officers commanding companies or other similar units of infantry, though it may, perhaps, be of use in training mounted troops for dismounted action.

Meantime, while the pipes of peace are still smoking, it is hoped it may be of some use to officers and non-commissioned officers when the time comes to prepare schemes of company training and put them into execution.

E. K.

September, 1913.

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION.

Since the above was written, the issue of new or amended Manuals of Training has necessitated a revision of the book, which is now presented in a form agreeable to the four-company organisation.

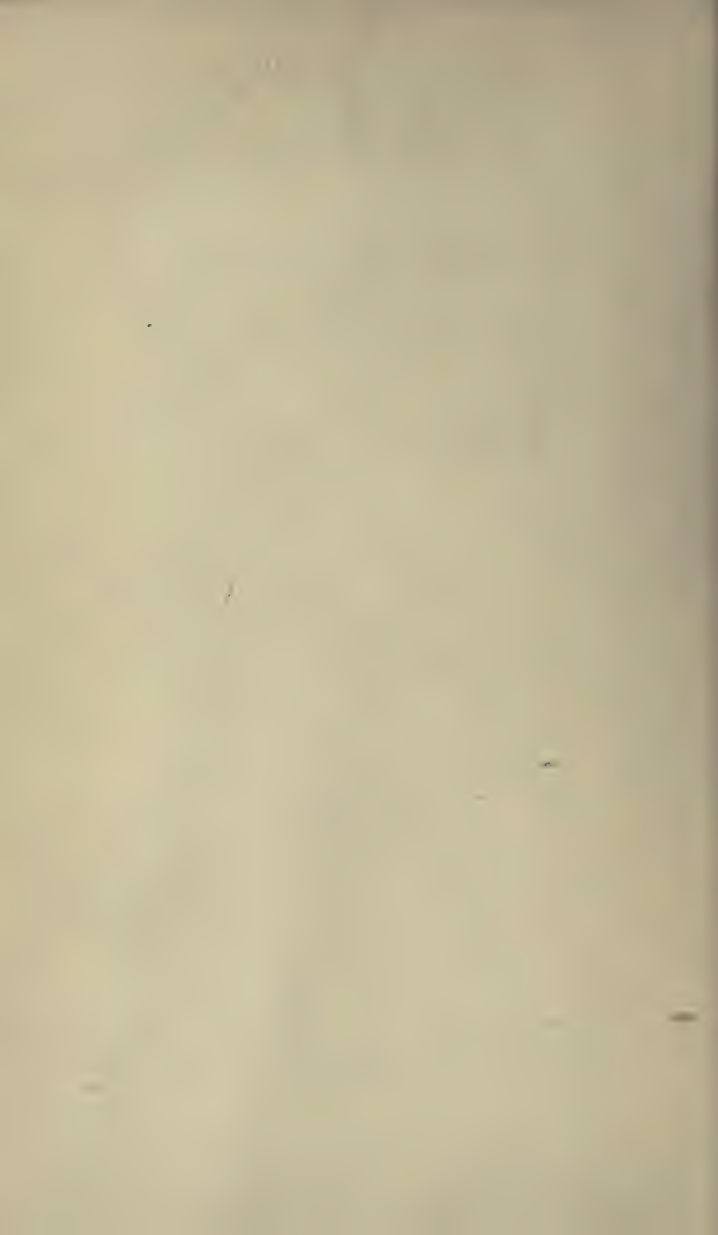
The Empire is now confronted by those circumstances to which allusion was made in the Preface.

E. K.

September, 1914.

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A FEW PRESS OPINIONS.

"UNITED SERVICE MAGAZINE."

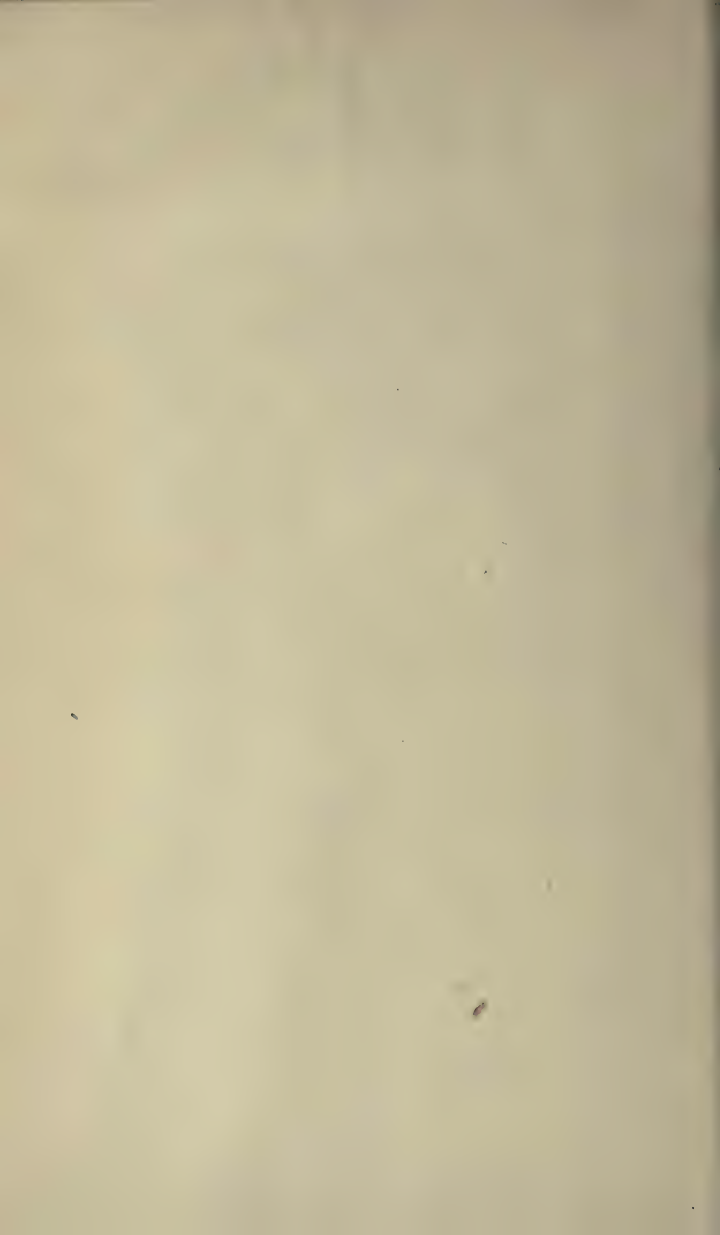
Major E. Kirkpatrick is the author of a small book on "The Training of an Infantry Company." There have been so many books and pamphlets of this kind—short cuts to knowledge—that one is apt to regard each fresh one with suspicion and even with aversion, but Major Kirkpatrick has much that is helpful to say, he says it well, and he shows how much good work may be done even in the training of the emasculated companies such as our military system so often leaves us. His instructions cover a wide field, and there must be few company officers who will not be grateful to the author for many valuable hints.

"UNITED SERVICE INSTITUTION OF INDIA."

There are few junior officers of infantry who will not benefit by a study of this book. The thorough system of training elaborated in the seventeen exercises, which form the major portion of the book, is worthy of the attention of Regular as well as Territorial Officers.

These elementary exercises deal with the essentials in the war training of the Infantry soldier, from the work of the individual in advance and retirement, and of the section in action and on protection duties, to the training of the company in attack and defence, and outpost.

As an example of a system of training illustrating the necessity of attention to detail in the early instruction of the soldier, this series of exercises is valuable, and their value is increased by the constant reference to training manuals. The author wisely recommends the study of all the official books referred to, as he recognises that his exercises and comments are only of value in so far as they illustrate and explain the principles laid down in training manuals.



THE TRAINING OF AN INFANTRY COMPANY.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

The authorised handbooks of training rightly confine themselves to broad principles, and do not attempt to give detailed examples of their application, the idea being that officers should study these regulations and apply the principles by the light of local conditions and their own experience. Infantry Training and the Field Service Regulations are, however, very pregnant little books, containing, as they do, a summary of the whole of Modern Tactics, as far as they concern infantry and the combined action of all arms. Time and thought are necessary, if the principles contained in them are to be translated into such intelligent action that the men trained on the lines laid down may be capable of doing their duty in real warfare, without first undergoing a bitter and costly schooling of useless

casualties or, perhaps, even of defeat. But if an officer is called on to achieve this result, being himself without much previous experience in training, he will find himself faced with a task of great difficulty, and, with the best intentions, he may waste precious time, as well as his own and his men's patience and energy, in doing parades and exercises, which are either not indispensable, or of minor importance for the main object. As an extreme example, it would be better, in a hastily raised corps, to combine the disciplinary training of obedience to the word of command, with instruction in the use of their arms, by practice in smart work in aiming and firing, than merely to study precision in "sloping" and "presenting arms," which look well, but do not immediately affect fighting efficiency.

For these reasons, it has occurred to me that I might do some of my brother officers *in esse* or *in posse* a service by setting out certain elementary exercises in training infantry soldiers, which I have found of value in bringing them up to a standard of battle training sufficiently high to need only battalion training and a baptism of fire to turn them into steady and reliable troops. It is not contended that these few examples are anything but

concrete instances of the application of the principles of the Training Manuals. They are intended, as has been stated, merely for those who are short of time and experience, and, therefore, references to the manuals are given when the exercise illustrates some particular section of those works, and it is recommended that officers who intend to use these examples should look up and read the sections referred to before going on to the parade.

Though this book is not meant for officers commanding battalions, I have one word to say to them, and it is this, that if they wish to have an efficient battalion they must let the company officers have proper opportunities of training their companies, apart from the time of company training, when the whole company is struck off duty. If there are six parades a week, let three or four of them be company parades, ordered and carried out by the company commanders; the balance will be quite enough to secure combination between the companies in battalion. On company parades, the battalion commander should supervise, but never interfere, unless things are being manifestly mismanaged. (See T. & M.R., 2 (2 and 3)). The days of the one man battalion are gone for ever. The company is the thing that

matters; a good battalion can only be composed of well-trained companies. It is the work of the battalion commander to propound the general lines of training and to use the companies to the best advantage in combination, but the training of the individual soldier must be in the hands of the man who is to lead him in war.

II.

On ordinary parades, the captain of an infantry company is seldom able to get together more than a fraction of his men. The calls on the company for men for duties and odd jobs, leave and furlough, and, in the Territorial Force, the private occupations of the men, allow of only a few being assembled on any one parade. This being so, there is a temptation—sometimes yielded to by officers who have not much experience, to say to themselves: "This is rot; what can I do without any men?" Such a question is the result of confusing the individual instruction of the men with the tactical practice of the leader in handling his company as a whole. The answer too often takes the form of an hour's close order drill or something similar, which may do some good, but not nearly as

much as if the officer stoutly made up his mind to make the best of a bad job and took out those few men and did some practical training in field operations. The fewer men there are on parade, the more individual attention will the company commander be able to give them. He will be able to look at each man's work more carefully, talk to the men and get to know their characters as soldiers, spot who are likely to make good non-commissioned officers, and coach them far more than if the whole company were on hand at once. So do not turn up your nose at a company only twenty strong, but make up a scheme of exercises to be gone through, and, since the men who are not on parade to-day will be so to-morrow, arrange to do the same exercise on two, or, if needed, three, consecutive days, so as to catch all, or, at least, most of the men, and your non-commissioned officers, who are not usually so drawn on for off-parade duties, will become well acquainted with each exercise, learn what to do and how to run things, and so become both a help to you as instructors, and themselves gain authority and power of command from the knowledge of their own competency.

It is quite likely that these exercises and the explanations given, may seem to some

readers to be absurdly simple and needlessly long-winded, while there is also a good deal of repetition. To this I will make early reply that they are written for officers who are not too proud to accept other people's advice in training a company of young soldiers of the stamp which would be forthcoming if some cause* or other tempted or constrained into military service that great proportion of our male population who are at present quite ignorant of a soldier's work, and who, from apathy, or a hundred other causes, do not join the Territorial Force. Such men probably have never in their lives given a thought to soldiering. The majority of them are town born and bred, and have passed most of their lives among bricks and mortar. If they have ever looked carefully at the large or small features of a bit of country, it has been from an industrial, sporting, or, perhaps, sentimental, but never from a tactical, point of view. They have everything to learn in making use of ground for fighting. Their ideas of using modern arms are equally crude; the primitive fighting instinct will be uppermost in their minds, and would express itself in an incontinent desire to get to close quarters with their enemy, when bayonet, butt or hand grips

*A cause now exists, and the men have come out.

would seem the proper way to settle the matter. A very laudable desire it is—this of wanting to close in—and one to be encouraged by every means, but however brave troops may be, they cannot in general indulge their desire to attain close quarters and the resulting facilities of fighting by the light of their natural instincts unless they have first been successful in the fire fight—the strife of the arms of artifice—which is waged by bullet and shell at distances which Nature never contemplated.

It is the artificiality of the fire fight which makes the task of turning town-bred men into skilful soldiers such a difficult and lengthy process. They must be led to look at ground in relation to its capabilities of increasing the effectiveness of their own fire and also of diminishing the result of that of the enemy, i.e., they must learn to select good fire positions and good cover. The problem of finding the latter for himself against a civilized foe begins, for the individual soldier, as soon as the enemy's rifle fire becomes effective and compels the use by his side of extended order; this is held to be on open ground about fourteen hundred yards from the enemy's infantry (I.T., 118 (4)). Prior to this the responsibility for cover rests with his leaders, as he

will then be in some close formation. Fire positions he must choose for himself as soon as his section commander ceases to be able to indicate his wishes, or to secure combined action by the whole unit. This will probably happen at about six hundred yards from the enemy, when individual fire is expected to replace controlled fire by sections. These two aspects of fighting—the use of ground, and the use of the rifle as a far-reaching weapon of almost absolute precision, if truly sighted and aimed—are foreign to our instincts, and the average man has to be trained till he is able to override his instinct and fight an artificial war, so as to work his way to charging distance. Some men need less training than others; a stalker in a deer forest is an adept in the use of cover, and in general, country-bred men should be easier to train than town-bred, but the majority of our men being the latter, we must lay ourselves out to teach them from the beginning this business of the fire fight, since success in this is usually necessary before the assault can succeed (I.T., 121 (7)). This can only be done by training them in extended order and putting them through various exercises chosen for the purpose. Any exercise which does not in some way tend

to fit men for battle is mere waste of time; aimless perambulations of an extended line fall under this category, but are quite often to be seen on parade grounds. No amount of smartness in close order drill will compensate for a deficiency of field training.

III.

The exercises which I have drawn up, simple though they are, are of the nature of "Instructional Operations," as defined by T. & M.R., 40 (12), and it is presupposed that the men have received, or are in course of receiving, sufficient instruction in the use of the rifle (musketry in all its branches), and of the bayonet (bayonet fighting), in drill in close order, and the drill grounding of extended order work, including signals (I.T., 90-96). We are then to consider ourselves to be at the stage in which the soldier is to be taught to work over broken country as directed in the latter part of para. 90, above quoted. But do not think the lessons learned at musketry instruction are to be forgotten and left behind by the men when they begin to work in extended order across country. Demand from your men that the rifle shall be deadly, and, by unceasing supervision,

breed a habit among them of aiming and firing in extended order, whether with or without blank cartridge, with the same exactitude as when firing their course of musketry on the range. Take the high standard—a hundred men's lives in one man's bandolier, instead of a hundred bandoliers for one man's life. The higher standard of the two is at least possible, though not common, but why not try and work towards it, so that when bullets are flying within decisive range of the enemy, it will be your men's fire, that is the deadly close-hitting kind, that makes afraid, and not the haphazard jet of bullets whose inefficacy lets unhurt familiarity breed tolerant contempt?

In the same way, when men are in close order at any time during a field parade, keep up the same smartness, and quick obedience to orders which are exacted in close order drills, in order that the men may become truly disciplined, and not merely so in appearance, so when they come under fire without being extended, as may happen in the early and distant stages of a fight, they will, as a matter of course, submit themselves to their commander's wishes, and ignore their own inclinations, which, just at the first experience, even with very brave men, might be for an immediate and independent

rush in some direction—perhaps forward, perhaps in another direction—they will be “in hand,” and free of the liability of raw troops to suffer from sudden panic or to become a mob, full of fight, perhaps, but still a mob, and as such, a force which cannot be controlled or used in furtherance of any general plan.

IV.

The want of a suitable and accessible bit of ground on which to train our men is one of the chief difficulties we have to meet in the United Kingdom, and, of course, it is greatest in the case of town corps, varying with the size of towns, while in large cities ground is not to be had at all, save at a distance of several miles from the men's dwelling places. Unfortunately, there is little doubt that the possession or lack of suitable training grounds has a great effect on the readiness, or otherwise, of troops to give a good account of themselves when they come under fire for the first time in their lives. The lack of it takes away reality from the work of the men in the ranks and cramps the initiative of their officers, who are given no opportunity to exercise their wits in figuring out practical situations which might occur on service.

I can give no recipe for obtaining the use of ground, but from what I have just said I hope it is clear that the officer commanding a battalion or company should use every blandishment or art of which he is capable to get the use of a stretch of ground, and also, if it is at a distance, and the attendance of the men at parades voluntary, he should try to provide facilities for getting them to and from the ground. The worst bit of country is better than the barrack square.

The ideal ground is that which gives conditions suited to each phase of the training, the principal requirements being fire positions and cover, and these should occur so as to provide illustrations of the use to be made of them in individual training, and in the collective training of sections, platoons, and the larger units. Thus, for training individual men, good ground would be that with an irregular surface, giving many places twenty to fifty yards apart, which each man could use in firing and taking cover. The usual seaside golf course of hummocks, furze bushes, and occasional watercourses, is good to teach individual men over—I say teach, for we must not imagine that an enemy will be so kind as to leave easy ground like that in his front, if he can help it. For section or platoon training,

the surface should be similar, so that the individuals should still be called on to look out for their own halting places, but, in addition, there should be a certain number of small features, hillocks, banks, and so on, one to four hundred yards apart, which will serve as fire positions and cover for the whole unit, and provide the commanders with successive objectives, to which it will be their duty to bring their men in good order, and without needless exposure to the enemy's fire. When the company is training together, the ground should be similar, but of greater extent, both broader and larger, so that sections and platoons may be practised in supporting each other, some being halted in these fire positions, and covering by their fire the movements of the others who are in process of gaining fresh vantage points. And so on for larger units and the combined action of all arms; good ground for early instruction is that whose features, from their nature and distance from each other, lend themselves to illustrate conditions under which the power of each unit and arm may be most profitably employed in conjunction with others. Troops trained over ground that gives the above advantages will acquire an eye for country. A knowledge of the uses to be made of ground

will be common to all ranks, so that when they find themselves fighting on bad ground, which does not give much cover or good fire positions, they will be the more apt to search for such cover and fire positions as are obtainable, while troops trained on flat and open ground would be much slower in making the best of a bad job. We are not concerned with anything more than a company; therefore, get for your own use, if you can manage it—failing help from higher powers—a bit of ground of some sort, golf course, common, city park, or what not. It need not be very extensive. Even if it gives only three or four positions suitable for occupation by a section working in conjunction with another, say, six hundred by three hundred yards, it will give room for useful instruction; but, of course, a larger extent is preferable, as giving room for more extended and varied exercises. If your training ground is of limited extent, it should, nevertheless, if possible, have a wide field of view on all sides beyond its own confines, and leave you the right to send a few men to take positions on the adjoining country, even if not allowed to manœuvre about it, so that when carrying out your exercises you may be able to use men with blank cartridge to act as a skeleton enemy, when such is needed. But if

you are not allowed to send men on to the neighbouring ground, the wide field of view will still enable you to indicate certain distant positions as *supposed* to be held by the enemy. By this means you will be able to use the whole area of your permissible ground to represent a bit of the battlefield, and escape having to place the supposed enemy absurdly close to your manœuvring troops, e.g., at the edge of the training-ground, or in some other position which makes heavy calls on the imagination. Britishers are not imaginative. Lastly, if all else fails, and you have nowhere to go except the flat parade ground, or even the drill hall, which in large towns is often very spacious, do not, I beg you, become discouraged and throw up all effort to get your men ready for field work. Do the exercises on the flat, limiting the extent of movements, if there is little room, and use flags or anything else to represent fire positions for sections and platoons, and let the men kneel or lie down between advances, if there is no cover. A great deal may be done in this way to lay a good foundation for extended order work. Your men will know the mechanism of it, and you will save much time when you do manage to have them out on a proper training ground. I.T., 107 (2), re-

quires company commanders, in preparing their schemes of training, to have regard to the ground at their disposal; do so, therefore, even if the ground aforesaid is only a parade ground, and make the most of it; it is better than sitting still and either doing nothing, or only a weary round of company drill in close order. Of course, you must let the men know what you are driving at, or they will get bored and lose interest.

V.

Having got a company of men and ground to train them on, the first step is to organise that company for its battle training. A company is organised into four platoons, each under a subaltern, with a sergeant as his second-in-command (platoon sergeant). Each platoon has four sections, and the sixteen sections of the company are numbered one to sixteen. The men of each of the above units remain permanently in that unit. *If possible*, maintain this organisation on duties and fatigues, though this is often a counsel of perfection, but quarter the men together, and insist on the maintenance of the organisation, *without deviation*, on parades. Have lists made up of the men of each platoon and section, and let men who so wish,

belong to the same unit. Once these lists are made up, see to it by means of the section commanders that these men fall in on parade together in the place in the company where their section is standing, no matter how few there are; if there are but two men of one section on parade, they should fall in as front and rear rank men of one file. Avoid disseminating the men of a platoon or section among other units in order to raise the latter to a sizeable strength. Instead of this: supposing you have three weak platoons and one strong one on parade; of the four sections of one of the weak platoons, send two to each of the other two weak platoons. This will give you three platoons of, perhaps, unequal strength, but sufficient for work—and this without taking the responsibility of section commanders off their shoulders, and the cohesion of each unit is preserved. Some further suggestions on the subject of organisation will be put forward when speaking of *moral*.

The officer who aspires to develop whatever capabilities his men possess of becoming individually and collectively formidable in battle, must pay attention to much more than mere physical considerations. Napoleon's dictum, that the moral is to the physical as three to one is early dinned into the ears of the officer of

Regulars, but may stand repetition in pages meant for the perusal of others. No officer can expect to get the most out of his men unless he directs his attention to the study of the psychical side of the training. There are two fields in which the study must be pursued. One is the officer's own personality, the other that of his non-commissioned officers and men. T. & M.R., 8, deals with the former, and should be read and pondered over.

In battle good men have sometimes achieved victory in spite of the shortcomings of their officers, but good officers, as well as men, are necessary for consistent success in the series of battles which make a campaign. Now, good officers, given time for training, will infallibly produce good men, provided the latter are of the average physique and courage. Therefore, study thyself, and try to see what you lack, in order to become a good officer. Cultivate your skill in handling your men by reading any books you can get; there are, unfortunately, not very many that deal with the work of such small units as companies or even single battalions. Go out into the country, or, if you have not time, recall to yourself some bit of country you know, and import an enemy into the landscape. Perhaps a few rifle-

men are holding ground on the flank of a road along which your battalion wants to march, but cannot, without undue loss, until these riflemen are driven off; and your commanding officer tells you to do the driving. In imagination, or on the ground, decide what position you would hold, if you were the enemy, in order to make yourself as nasty as possible—though having no hope of being reinforced—to the battalion trying to come along the road. Then settle in your mind what you, as commanding your company, would do to get rid of the annoyance. Be quite clear, what would you do? Go at them bald-headed? There are times and enemies when this is the best way; you would have to be fairly close, and the enemy not shooting very straight, and rather careful of his skin; or will you march a long way round till the enemy sees you are getting behind him, and so manœuvre him out? Then your battalion will be a long time waiting. Or will you look at the ground and find, let us suppose, a spot to which you will send a section or platoon to open a fire on the enemy, while another works its way to a point you have noted from which fire can be brought to sweep crossways a little knoll, or some such supposititious feature which seems to form the enemy's left flank, and

to be occupied by ten or twelve men, and which gives command over the rest of his position? Then, while the second lot is on its way, you plan to lead the remainder a little way round, under cover, in order to get to fairly close range of the knoll, so that when the second party opens fire on it, and its defenders are hampered both by this fire and by that of those you first posted, you may surprise them by an outburst of fire from your reserve, and either drive them off their perch by cross-fire from three directions, or, if they do not shift, run in at them with the bayonet, trusting to get across the intervening space at the cost of a few casualties, when your superior numbers at that point should ensure your success even if they actually await the bayonet. Learn to consider quickly how many ways there are of doing such a job as the above, and to decide quickly and rationally which is the best.

These schemes, involving only a company or two, will not be presented for your solution by your battalion commander; you must set them yourself, and their solution, and the thinking necessary thereto are the best methods an officer can get of training himself without having his men on the ground. In your mind's eye, put your company into every situation you can

think of, and get it out again, and you will have acquired an enormous reserve of capacity for acting quickly and rightly when your men and your enemy are both on the ground. But beware of dealing in too short distances, or you may produce unreal pictures of war. Do not imagine manœuvres at four hundred yards from the enemy when every man exposed would be hit in a few minutes. The clearness and decision of thought you acquire will be reflected in the orders you give. Your men will give you their confidence when they see, as they are quick to do, that you know your job. There is nothing more disheartening for a subordinate, be he private or colonel, than to feel he is under control of a duffer, whose mistakes he will have to correct. This feeling saps discipline, and quickly destroys the fighting value of a body of men. In peace training, the men become sulky at being "bothered about," lose interest in their work, and wish themselves done with parade. In war, their personal characters usurp the control of their actions, and they become a mob in uniform.

But in addition to possessing the confidence of the men in your tactical ability, you should seek all other means to increase your influence over them. Gain their

respect in other ways, by honesty of purpose, by example, tact, devotion to duty, and so on. Gain their goodwill by watching over their individual and collective interests, though in this you must play to the gallery sufficiently to let them identify you as the source of benefits received. Keep an even temper, and do not show anger without good cause. Personal attachment to their officer shows itself most when men's powers are taxed by hardship, fatigue, and danger; it is then a great auxiliary in maintaining discipline among the mass.

VI.

As regards the *moral* of the men, I.T., I (4 to 10) must be referred to. You *must* introduce discipline—the habit of subordinating personal inclination to the orders of the superior promptly and without cavil. If your men are raw, you have to go slow just at first till they all know what is expected of them. Let them understand that orders are not given haphazard, but are invariably based on some good reason, which, being so, there is no need for reasons to be always stated, nor for recipients of orders to feel unhappy for want of them. If you can induce a feeling among the men that slackness on parade, slowness in obeying orders, and so

on, are bad form, and tend to disgrace the company, you will do well, and this good spirit will enable you to enforce discipline without having recourse to punishment, if you are vested with the power of inflicting it.

I have already said that when in close order during tactical exercises, you should maintain discipline in the ranks. I now go further and say that you should maintain it when the men are extended or detached from the company singly or in small groups. Evidently the discipline here needed is something more than mere mechanical obedience. What it is, is to be found in T. & M.R., 39 (4), and F.S.R. 12 (13), and I.T., 116 and 117. Make the men understand that when they are extended they must obey their unit commander's orders and signals as to fire and movement at once, and without hesitation, and must be always on the look-out for them. Allow no talking, except what relates to the business in hand, such as passing of orders or information, results of fire, and so on. Hold the men responsible that if they are out of reach of the control of their leader, it is their duty to carry out the spirit of the orders under which they set out. To bring their responsibility home to them, you must make a point of calling men occasionally

to give an account of what they did when detached, and why they did it, so that they may pause for a moment if they are of the sort that take advantage of opportunity to sit behind a hedge and smoke a cigarette when they ought to be up and doing.

Here you will naturally say that this is all very well, but how is one to look after men scattered here and there over several hundred yards of rough country? Here come in the non-commissioned officers, of whom, so far, no mention has been made, and also your subaltern officers. Since success in battle will depend largely on the efficiency of fire unit commanders, and the normal fire unit is the section (I.T., 6 (4)), it is evident that the section commander is a very responsible person, and much must be expected from him.

Your subalterns and platoon sergeants you must use as your delegates in supervising and leading the platoons to which they belong, except when they are needed to act specifically as platoon commanders, keeping themselves constantly on the move among the men, looking at the details of the work, sighting of rifles, aiming, use of cover, choice of lines of movement, not lying down themselves nor participating in the operation as combatants. When you

wish to give them practice in setting exercises themselves, turn the whole company over to one of them and act yourself as critic, or act as subaltern under his orders. This is one means of supervision.

The next is your non-commissioned officers. They are in direct command, and you must hold them responsible for their sections, but when their units are acting in conjunction with others, it is evident they cannot act both as commanders and instructors unless certain concessions are made, for if the non-commissioned officers as well as the men of a section were to act as they would have to do under real fire, each non-commissioned officer might be able only to supervise a man or two on his right and left, the rest being too far off. Therefore, at the beginning of an exercise, you should tell the non-commissioned officers whether, in addition to giving executive commands, they are to be at liberty to move about freely and act as instructors also. Needless to say, in instructional exercises, and until the men are quite seasoned, you should let them do this, but, on the other hand, in exercises meant to illustrate actual conflict and the limitations imposed by the presence of an enemy, they should pay attention to those limitations so that they, as well as the men, may be prepared

to endure the disabilities imposed by Service conditions.

Next comes yourself. Once you have given your subordinates your orders for any exercise, leave them to carry it through, and make yourself as ubiquitous as may be in supervision. Keep criticism for the end, and interference only for the prevention of absurdities. To make yourself ubiquitous, the best way is to use your horse, and make the noble animal do the running about with you on his back. You can then get through about six times what you can on your own feet, by cantering from one section to another, and you get a better view of the whole performance, but you must remember when correcting anything the men are doing that you are mounted, while they are probably kneeling or lying, and much that you see is invisible to them. Equip yourself with a pair of field glasses, and also with a megaphone, which latter should be about fourteen inches long, and carried by a strap over the shoulder, the strap punched so as to be capable of being made long or buckled up close under the arm, according as you need to use the megaphone, or wish to get it out of your way. Use your glasses to look at what sections and individual men in them are doing. They will reveal to you small

mistakes that escape notice at some distance with the unaided eye. The megaphone saves you a lot of small excursions to get to earshot of men, and also a lot of shouting at a distance, which is fatiguing, and is apt to lead to exacerbation of tempers, both of the shouter and the listener. Moreover, it enables you to hear as well as speak from a distance. This is done simply by holding it aimed at the other man with your ear instead of your mouth at the mouthpiece. Use your whistle to call attention to orders or signals, carry it in your hand, not in your pocket, and put a loop in the cord and pass the loop over your middle finger, or you will be always dropping it. Instead of a cane, carry a small semaphore flag, and give your signals with it. This saves a good deal of arm-waving, and tends to smarten up movement, as it is more easily seen than the arm. By bringing all these aids into your service, you will find that you can make your influence felt, although the sections are separated by the greatest distances which they are ever likely to be called on to take up in battle.

VII.

Besides discipline, there are certain other moral influences which give strength

to an Army. These are indicated in I.T., I (4 and 5). The two mighty forces of religion and patriotism are not treated of here, as they have their roots not in any system of training, but in the upbringing of the youth of the nation, but there is one force which you, as a humble commander, can call into play, and that is shame—the dread of losing the respect of oneself and of one's comrades. During peace training you may make men dread the public shame of misbehaviour by the aid of those means of supervision which I have suggested, but in war the power to supervise is greatly curtailed, and it is very desirable to find something to replace it, and, at the same time, to supplement a too absolute reliance on the stoutness of men's hearts, for this may prove a broken reed when the troops are largely composed of unseasoned soldiers.

To a certain extent, the organisation of the company into permanent sections provides us with the substitute we desire, as the men of sections are likely to be cognisant of how their comrades behave when out of view of the rest of the company as long as the whole of the men of the section are in view of each other; but this will not

always be the case: for example, in wood fighting or in house fighting, both of which would assuredly occur if our men have to fight in Europe. In such fighting everything comes down to the pushfulness of the individual soldiers, for even sections will lose their leaders. Therefore let us carry the principle of the company organisation logically one step further, and make the men of a file as they fall in on parade in the section act in conjunction for the remainder of that parade. This arrangement is recognised in the last edition of the Musketry Regulations, and has, at various times, been adopted in former drill books of our Army, and has given excellent results, while, if the present book does not prescribe it, at least it countenances it (I.T., 123 (12)), and I strongly recommend your introducing it into your company. It is likely to produce emulation in the fire fight among men whose hearts are in the right place, and in the assault it must produce the advantages of combination, for two men coming on with the bayonet in conjunction are far more likely to do someone an injury than if they each came on independently, since in the latter case a cool and skilful antagonist might dispose of one and then the other, even as the Japanese are said to have stepped aside

when charged by the Russians, who, running forward blindly and head down, fell an easy prey to their alert little enemies, and were bayoneted in succession as they arrived. The proof of this pudding is the eating thereof, and if your company ever happens to be alongside a company told off daily into haphazard sections, as is sometimes done, in spite of rules, you will then see the difference, even if it is only at manœuvres. In close order they may still look alike, but let them be extended in rough country, and you will see that yours is the blade of steel; the particles of its metal are coherent; it will bend, but not break. The other is of wrought iron, polished on the surface but of brittle material, and sure to fly to pieces in any rough usage. By this file organisation you will produce in the men in the ranks the highest degree of cohesion—the habit of regulating their own actions in accordance with the actions and needs of others in furtherance of one general aim.

Having secured this cohesion among the men, you have still to produce it within the company as between platoons and sections. For cohesion is the coping stone of the edifice of efficiency, and rests on a basis of discipline, moral and training. It makes possible the application of

the principle of mutual support which is indispensable in the attack (F.S.R., 105 (4)), and it enables retirements and defensive action to be carried out without disorganisation, and with the minimum of loss. Whenever sections act together, see to it that the non-commissioned officers keep an eye on the movements of the others, and question them as to the extent their orders to their sections should be influenced by the needs and movements of the others. By this means they will be induced to check the inclination to play only for their own hands, and to remember always that their unit is part of a combination which can best attain success by acting accordingly.

VIII.

Training is the preparation of officers and men for the duties which they will carry out in war. These duties consist in the application of the principles contained in the training manuals, and it is your business to provide concrete examples. But in these days of long range arms combats take a very long time, and you cannot expect in a parade of perhaps one or at most two hours, and with a limited extent of ground, to carry out all the varied phases of an operation which, in warfare,

would take anything from six to eighteen hours to complete, and would extend over perhaps five or six miles of country, even if we limit ourselves to the extreme ranges of heavy artillery, and take no account of movements not within the range of possible fire. Therefore, in your training, you must be analytical, choosing for one parade such phase or phases as you have time and ground for, and doing the others later on. When your company knows all it can be taught thus piecemeal, it will be early enough to try to get time and ground to perform continuous operations.

For instance, infantry in the attack will usually have to go through three phases: first, the advance to fire positions; second, the fire fight (I.T., 121 (6)); and, third, the assault, which latter must be divided into the charge and the steps which follow it according as it is successful or not. You will have to train for these three phases. The first, against an enemy armed with guns and rifles, would consist in opening out from column of route into little columns—sections or platoons—and moving forward in this formation, the main object being to escape being smashed to pieces by his artillery fire before being able to do him any damage (I.T., 118 (3)). Later, you

would come under his rifle fire, and your little columns must scatter out into lines of men in extended order (I.T., 118 (5)). These movements seem, and are, very easy, but still they must be practised in peace if they are to be done coolly and without confusion in time of war when the first intimation of the necessity for opening out may be the shriek and crash of what will be to most of the men the first shrapnel they have ever seen, and withal aimed at themselves. This phase requires the presence of all four platoons of the company, and so may be kept over till the men have been trained in the phase which it precedes, namely, that of the fire fight.

The fire fight begins when the attacking infantry have got as far forward as they can without having to reply to the enemy's fire, and it is quite distinct from the preceding phase of passive endurance. Success in the fire fight is an absolute necessity for a successful assault. Possibly your enemy has prepared your success before war broke out by abstaining from training his men in musketry, but even if his shooting is inferior, the fire fight will call into play all the qualities and skill of which your men are possessed, both individually and collectively. Accordingly you should practise them in the fire fight from the

opening of their fire up to the assault, first individually and then collectively.

The assault can be dissected into the fixing of bayonets with as little cessation of fire as possible, the charge itself, followed, according as it is held to have been successful or not, by the rallying of the troops, pursuit of the enemy by fire and strengthening of the captured position, or the withdrawal or such mitigation of the results of failure as may fairly be attempted. Thus, by considering the attack as made up of phases as above, it is, I think, possible and instructive to practise each one of them separately, on a short parade, and on limited ground, by placing the men in the order in which they would be at beginning of any one phase, and carrying on from there.

Before beginning any exercise, call your non-commissioned officers out to the front, and explain to them and to the men, in very full detail, what the exercise is intended to be, what points particularly require attention, how you want it done, and the sequence of events, if it involves combined action between the different units; whether the company is supposed to be acting by itself or as part of the battalion, and, if the latter, whether your side are having the support of artillery fire or not, where the enemy is, and what he

is, i.e., is he infantry only, or has he also cavalry and guns, what he is supposed to be doing, attacking, defending, retiring, marching, or what. Deal with all such points before you start, otherwise you will find your non-commissioned officers and men filling in the blanks each according to his own bent of imagination, and everyone in consequence playing at a different game. To be thus able to define the scope and arrangements of the exercise, you must have it clearly planned out in all detail in your head. This you should do if possible the day before the parade, so that you will have the thing well thought out, and events marshalled in logical sequence.

At all exercises, if possible, have the enemy represented by a skeleton force, as directed by T. & M.R., 48, a few actual men with blank cartridge, and a red range flag or two to roughly define the enemy's position. Use for this purpose old soldiers, if you have them, or, at least, men who have already performed the exercise you mean to do, and it is better to take one or two men from each platoon than to send off a whole section, and so break up the company organisation. Six or eight men are quite enough to form any skeleton enemy that is needed for a company to manœuvre against. You must give the skeleton enemy definite orders as

to what they are to represent, where they are to go, and what to do and not to do. If they are given at all a free hand, especially if under the enterprising British subaltern, they are very apt to indulge in far-reaching manœuvres, and subject you to sudden raids and onslaughts which upset your scheme for the parade, and leave you no enemy at the very point you wished to have him. If you cannot arrange for a skeleton enemy, at least never fail to indicate some position as supposed to be held by an enemy. If your exercise ground is limited in extent, fix the enemy's position outside it, regardless of whether you have, or have not, licence to traverse the intervening space, so as to avoid carrying out your exercise within impossibly close range of the enemy. In default of a skeleton enemy to provide you with a target, tell your men to aim at any members of the public who are about the enemy's position. This is better than snapping at inanimate objects, as it gives more interest and so keeps up careful aiming. As regards the general method of training, follow commonsense and the manuals, and work from individual up to collective, bearing in mind always that collective work is built up of the work of the individuals who throughout have to be kept up to the collar by the various arts which I have touched on. The

less of the iron hand that is shown the better.

IX.

I make no mention of scouts, as they are specialists. They must be selected after you have got to know all the men of your company and their capabilities. Their training as scouts cannot be carried out by you personally at the same time that you are training the company. To be really of use, it will be a whole-time job for one officer, and you will either have to turn them over to one of the subalterns, or go with them yourself, preferably the former, if the subaltern is capable. When they are trained and fall in on parade as scouts in their sections, it is a good plan to have places permanently reserved for them as third files from the left of sections (the blank file's place) so that they can leave the ranks without disturbing the formation for forming fours.

As regards dress one thing is quite certain, and that is that with only one suit of uniform men cannot appear clean and smart off duty in it, and yet use it for field work with all the lying down and knockabout wear involved. In time of national danger, appearances will go to the wall, and men will do their work at the expense of the fit of their one and only suit of uniform.

EXERCISE I.

INDIVIDUAL ADVANCE IN EXTENDED
ORDER.

The exercise portrays what men will have to do when the rifle fire of the enemy becomes effective, and necessitates extension of the small columns which are used to dodge his shell fire (I.T., 118 (3)). This will be somewhere over one thousand yards from the enemy, and perhaps fourteen hundred may be taken as a maximum. From the point at which extension from the small columns is made up till the time of the assault, a line of men in extended order is the suitable formation, unless there is some covered way leading forward which can be traversed in file or other formation. Once the advance has begun it should be carried through as quickly as possible without exhausting the men too much, and fire should not be opened until it is absolutely necessary to neutralise that of the enemy, firstly, because it lessens the speed of the advance and so increases the time during which the attackers are exposed to the enemy's fire; secondly, because once

men start firing it is more difficult to lead them forward ; and, thirdly, because it uses up cartridges whose value and difficulty of replacement increases at every yard nearer the enemy's position.

The exercise is then to train men to gain ground to the front with the minimum of exposure to the enemy's fire, and as quickly as may be, firstly, without firing, and, secondly, while firing themselves, but in the latter case speed must be subordinated to the development of a fire of sufficient accuracy and volume to largely neutralise that of the enemy, for at this stage of the battle advances under fire will only be possible if it is inaccurate ; and the only certain means of causing it to be inaccurate is by disturbing the enemy's nerves and aim by bringing to bear on him the fire both of supporting troops and of the firing line itself (I.T., 118 (6)).

The regulations do not encourage the opening of fire by units less than two platoons at ranges over one thousand yards as the results do not compensate for the delay. Under one thousand and up to six hundred it is desired that fire should be controlled and directed, i.e., the amount, and the target should be specified by commanders (I.T., 116). Under six hundred yards it is recognised

that individual fire gives good results, and, moreover, control becomes almost impossible.

Divide your exercise accordingly. First, teach merely the advance without firing, letting the men know that they are not to fire, as a rule, without orders under six hundred yards, and then let them advance firing at each halt behind cover, choosing their own target and times of firing as they would do in the stage of "close fire," i.e., six or perhaps eight hundred yards up to assaulting distance, which latter is about two hundred yards from the enemy's line of defences.

This parade is one that can be done with very few men present, but it is necessary to form them up into sections with a large proportion of non-commissioned officers. Keep the men in their proper sections, but, if necessary, join two or three together, so as to form sections with three or four non-commissioned officers to each. Thus, if you form four sections, they should each be in reality a boiling down of the platoons. In future exercises I will also suppose that you thus concentrate your men, keeping the members of each section together, and form them into sections of size suitable to the work of the day, and no further allusion will be made to this.

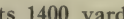
Before taking the men on to the exercise ground, you should choose a point on it from which you intend to start your advance. Some fourteen hundred or less yards from this choose a position for your skeleton enemy, who will consist of three or four old soldiers with forty rounds of blank each. If men are not available, put up a few red range flags. Whichever are used, put them into some position that an enemy might reasonably occupy; do not simply dump them down on to the ground. The skeleton enemy must be told to show up occasionally, and to open a slow but regular fire as soon as they see your men advancing, but only to keep it up as long as your men show themselves in making their advance. A complete cessation of fire will denote that your men are making such good use of cover as to be invisible to the enemy. Let your men also know that these instructions have been given, and that such an advance is the ideal to be sought for, provided always that it is not absurdly slow. If neither men nor flags are available you must make believe and point out a supposed position at a supposed distance. I have already pointed out the advantages of having a skeleton enemy to work against.

In front of your starting point, and about

four hundred yards from it, decide on some point at which you will let the men halt after they have made their way across the intervening space. Here I will refer you to the diagram. The line AA' is your starting point, CC' the enemy's position. Your exercise consists in showing individual men how to gain ground from AA' as far as BB', distant about four hundred yards from AA', with the minimum of exposure to the enemy's aimed fire. Draw up the sections, supposing there are two, on the line AA', fifty to one hundred yards apart, and let the men sit down facing away from CC' and, if possible, under cover, so that they may not see how their comrades negotiate the course. Space the available non-commissioned officers of each section along the course from A to B and A' to B', with orders to supervise and criticise the advance of each man within the limits of their beats. Allow a belt of twenty to thirty yards broad from A to B and from A' up to B', within which men must seek their cover. This belt is made broad here to afford instruction, but when the men work together in their sections, it will be much narrower, as they will then be extended at intervals of five or six paces only. Start off one man at a time from each section to cross from AA' to BB', to move as if under fire from the enemy in rushes from

one cover to another. As soon as a man reaches BB' he may fall out and watch the movements of the remainder. Do not send off a fresh man until the preceding one has nearly reached BB', so that your non-commissioned officers may have good opportunity to look at each man as he goes. As for yourself, be active in supervising both sections, using your horse if you have one.

The following are points to be attended to:—Before leaving their cover, men must decide where their next halting place is to be, and make for it quickly, and with decision. There must be no emerging into the open, and then looking about for a bit of cover to go for. The length of each rush should not be enough to let the enemy have time for deliberate aim—fifty yards or so is quite the limit for this. If there is no cover the men must lie down flat between each rush. Occasionally it is advisable to make a long rush from one good position to another at sprinting pace without stopping at all (I.T., 121 (12)), so this should be practised sometimes, the non-commissioned officers at that part of the beat being ordered to tell the men what is needed. Once a man has decided on his next halting place, and is in wind, he should leave his cover with a jump. The slow uprising of a figure is sure to draw the enemy's attention, and



from AA' to

cate cover

ut 400^x

AA' to BB' is about $400\times$

make his fire more accurate than it would be if no intimation were given him. Similarly, on reaching cover, men should fall down quickly, and not lower themselves slowly to earth.

Insist on a careful choice of cover, a very small depression or elevation, even six inches, is enough to give cover from view, and therefore helps in escaping aimed fire, but in peace time men will not take trouble over apparently trifling things like this unless it is rubbed into them by close supervision. Noticeable objects should be avoided as the enemy may have taken their range, and they help him to define a point on which to concentrate fire. If a man makes mistakes and shows indecision at any part of the course, call him back to the last cover he left, and let him start again from there after pointing out what he has done wrong.

II. The advance combined with individual fire.

The second part of the exercise is done in the same way as the first, the men advancing and taking cover as before, but now using their rifles. They have to be taught to use the cover to advantage, both as a protection and as an aid to their shooting, and to take pains in searching for a

good target, and in their sighting, aiming and firing. For purposes of instruction, six hundred yards is rather a short range to open fire at, and I recommend your making a start at eight hundred or so, i.e., two hundred yards beyond BB' towards the enemy, working up to four hundred. This necessitates judging distance at beyond the practically point-blank ranges of the Lee-Enfield rifle, and makes the men use their eyes keenly to spot the enemy, while it avoids a certain amount of unreality which is apt to attach to instructional movements carried on in front of a skeleton enemy at the deadly short ranges under three hundred yards.

Points which should be considered are :—

To fire from the right and lower edge of any cover, not over the top.

Make the men keep a count of the number of times they snap over the course (i.e., cartridges used), and report to the non-commissioned officer at the finish of their course.

Let the men do their own judging distance, and let non-commissioned officers drop at once on any man who either fails to do so, or forgets, as they often do, to adjust the backsight.

Cultivate a habit among the men of looking about for different targets, not firing

only straight in front of themselves, but on their right and left, so that when they come to fire collectively they may feel nothing new in being told to open the enfilade fire recommended by I.T., 116 (11), and also get the custom of watching for the enemy all along his front.

These two exercises of advancing with and without firing are the groundwork of the fighting efficiency of the soldier in the attack, and will be found to call for every natural and acquired qualification the individual possesses. Good shooting, quick judgment, activity, wind, and everything else are needed if the work is done with full observance of the conditions which would exist under fire. Put the men through exercises of this sort several times, and, if possible, on different ground, till they acquire quickness in choosing cover and the arts that make an expert fighter. Confidence in themselves will come with the skill they acquire, and with confidence comes decision of mind, which is really more important than bodily efficiency. If you have time, a useful rider to this exercise is to work the men by pairs, as is recommended in the Musketry Regulations for the observation of fire, and so introduce them early to the use of the file organisation which I have advised you to adopt.

EXERCISE II.

RETIREMENT BY PAIRS.

A sound provision against panic among young troops is to accustom them to regard a retirement as all in the day's work, and not as an exceptional undertaking which their anxiety may invest with possibilities of disaster. The essence of successful retirement in face of an enemy lies in the continuous opposition, or appearance of it, offered to the enemy by one portion of the troops, while others draw off to take post to cover the withdrawal of the rearmost portion. I.T., 137, gives the idea in few words. It does not mention individual training in this, but it is useful to put men through the movements, both to cultivate cohesion in the ranks, and as a tactical exercise. It may happen in war that an extended line has to give ground when engaged with the enemy, and this under so heavy a fire as to make movement except over short distances impossible without great loss. Such a withdrawal would mean that the troops are in a very tight corner, and would test them very highly, but that is another matter. It may happen, and

should be prepared for. A withdrawal under these conditions might perhaps be carried out by the alternate movement of men in files covered by the fire of the others, until such a distance from the enemy had been obtained as to allow sections or companies to take up the alteration. Up to that distance it will be simply a reversal of what was done in Exercise I., but worked by files—a front rank man and his rear rank man, one going back a short distance, and the other firing to cover the movement. Again, men on patrol or otherwise detached may have to retire to avoid capture, or for many other reasons, when they might not be under close and heavy fire, but still would be under the necessity of preventing the enemy closing in on them or surrounding them. In this case, the length of each withdrawal would be much longer than in the former case; one man would fire while the other made off perhaps two or three hundred yards at his best speed. Train for both contingencies; it can be done in one and the same parade. Skeleton enemy as usual. For the withdrawal under heavy fire, let the sections sit down and fall out at BB' (Diagram I.), and put out the non-commissioned officers between BA and B' A' as before. Call out the men by files, tell them to work back to A and A',

one firing, the other retiring. As a rule they should retire past each other before halting. The same points must be observed as in Exercise No. 1, and the quicker they are in movement the better, but they must be taught to go in quick time also when so ordered (I.T., 137 (4)).

For the retirement of a file as on patrol, do exactly the same, but you should work over six hundred yards of ground or so to correct any tendency to import the short rush into this exercise, which would be out of place, and also to let men have more practice in looking for suitable fire positions from which they can both fire on the enemy, *and from which they can get away when their turn comes*, a point they often neglect at first. The different nature of the two exercises must be made quite clear.

At this exercise you should bring before your men the need of using all sorts of *ruses* in a retirement, the use of rapid fire just before withdrawing, the sham withdrawal acted by ceasing fire, and retiring a few yards, but only to halt and re-open fire after a few seconds if the enemy has been tempted to expose himself, thinking the coast clear, the real withdrawal effected so carefully that the enemy is not sure whether you are there still or not, and so on ; and make them put their own ideas of

these plans into action and tell them if they are doing what is feasible on service or not. Bar all "manœuvre slimness," i.e., anything that could not be done on service.

EXERCISE III.

INDIVIDUAL TRAINING IN USE OF FIRE AND FIRE DISCIPLINE.

Early lessons in fire discipline can be given in single rank on the parade ground, but the open country and extended order are wanted for training men to the fullest extent under service conditions. Only in the open country can be got the variety of targets, ranges and the visual training which are necessary for a complete education. Men must be taught, and taught again, that the taking up of extended order, and movement over all sorts of ground, in no way mean that they are to pass at once beyond the control of their unit leaders, or that it is optional to continue to take any sort of pains with their shooting just because their non-commissioned officers cannot stand over them, but have to shout orders from a distance.

This exercise consists in advancing and retiring in extended order with fire and the use of cover when halted; but to allow for more prolonged shooting practice and closer supervision than are possible when carrying out an attack or retire-

ment as on service, the halts are longer and movements should at first be made in quick time.

Put out your skeleton enemy on a good broad front, so as to allow room for change of targets, and do not have them all in one straight line, so that each target shall call for a change of sighting. Let the sections work independently of each other under their section commanders, who, with the other non-commissioned officers, will have to act both as commanders and instructors. Bring the sections up to about twelve hundred yards from the enemy; get them into a line with intervals between them, i.e., spaces measuring from the flank of one to the flank of the other, sufficient to admit of each section being extended to two or three paces between men without its flank men coming too close to those of other sections, e.g., with two sections of eight file, i.e., sixteen men each; you must leave room for half of each to extend to two paces towards the other, and keep a fair interval; that is, from the centre of each of the above sections of eight men in each rank you want $8 \div 2$ (half the number in the front rank) $\times 2$ (two ranks) $\times 2$ (two paces extension) = 16 paces for the line extended and an interval of, say, 30 yards, which gives 46 yards between

each section centre to centre. Now, let the section commanders order the men to extend, lie down, take cover and open fire. The unit commander, the non-commissioned officer in charge of the section, is to name the target and distance and also the rate of fire, rapid or slow, at all distances over six hundred yards from the enemy (I.T., 116 (5)), unless it is desired on occasion to train men to do this for themselves. After fire has been delivered, direct section commanders to proceed with the exercise, giving orders for advancing, halting and firing, the advance to be made from cover to cover as in Exercise No. 1, but in quick time. Yourself supervise in chief, and tell section commanders when you want to give orders as to the firing or movement, and let them give the executive commands, after which you and they should pass along the lines and scrutinise each man's actions in carrying out the orders, questioning them, and repeating hints you may have given when telling them the object and methods of the practice, if they appear not to be giving them effect. The value of the practice depends on the orders you give as to the firing and the following are suggested:—

(a) Switching the fire of all the rifles on to different parts of the enemy's posi-

tion, sometimes straight in front, *but quite as often* at his extreme flanks. This is to introduce the use of enfilade fire (I.T., 116 (11)) and the habit of giving support by fire to other units (F.S.R., 105 (4)), by concentrating the fire on to particular targets.

(b) Distributing the fire laterally along the whole or a part of the enemy's front (I.T., 116 (10)). This may be done by giving the section a particular extent of the enemy's front, e.g., "from the dry tree to the gate in the hedge." The section commander then allots those of the enemy, who can be viewed within his bit of front to individual men, or preferably files of men, who are to treat them as their especial charge and keep on firing at them till otherwise ordered, or till the enemy shifts. Of course, if there is not enough of the skeleton enemy to give each file in the section a live antagonist (and there won't be on your parades), the commander must indicate bits of cover which individual men of the enemy might be expected to use and tell his men to fire at these spots. This is a most important practice, and needs a good deal of attention and application before the men get really quick at it. It means, of course, that on service you will make it your business to allow as few of the enemy's

riflemen as possible to be free of the distraction of having some bullets landing about them, to upset their nerves and aim. Unless some plan is adopted to do this all along his line, it is all too probable your men will be exposed to some accurate fire from rifles held in steady hands, and even one rifle so held has, to my knowledge, caused a loss of eleven men in as many minutes. This lateral distribution is rather difficult, but it is easy, compared with the concomitant task of spotting where the men of the enemy are hidden, if they really try to hide, at anything but the shortest fighting ranges. The only remedy for this is for each private to carry field glasses of sorts; you will not get them from Government, but if any of your men are keen enough to go in for spotting a hidden enemy for themselves with glasses and would bring their own to parade, forbid them not, but encourage it. I have been told that in some of the yeomanry corps in the South African war nearly every trooper raised somehow and somewhere a pair of glasses—some were mother o' pearl and silver-mounted, but did the spotting all right in spite of that.

(c) Passing orders and changing targets. Under heavy fire non-commissioned officers will not be able to

move along the line, and orders must be passed either by word of mouth or by written messages passed from hand to hand; the former is apt to be slow, and the orders garbled en route unless practised beforehand; the latter is not very practical as men in action are too busy to read bits of paper or trouble themselves to see that they are passed on (I.T., 119 (4)). To practise the verbal method while the men are engaged in firing at any particular target, give orders to one man in a low tone (you would have to speak loud if ball cartridge were being used) to fire at some other target, and to pass the word. The man then tells his neighbours on each side, and yourself and a non-commissioned officer then follow the order each way, and when a man varies it admonish him to repeat just what he got from the last speaker, no more and no less. In a little time the men will become exact in taking and passing messages. This method should be confined to directions about firing; orders for movement should invariably be given by commanders by word themselves or signal, and men should not be allowed to repeat these, as it may lead to grave mistakes on service, as a signal may be seen and acted on by someone for whom it was not intended.

(d) Besides firing at the skeleton enemy

or bits of cover, let fire be directed at civilians who are moving about in the field of view. Call on some individual man by name to choose some such target, and tell him he has to pass the word to the rest of his squad what target he has chosen and to fire at it. This gives practice in target definition, i.e., describing its position so that other men can know just where to look for it. It is not easy in a landscape devoid of noticeable objects to do this quickly, but it is important, as the difficulty of locating a well-concealed enemy with smokeless powder requires that every pair of eyes in the ranks should be engaged in the search till all the positions of the enemy's riflemen are seen, and the information given to everyone in the firing line. Until this is done, the affair is one of trying to neutralise aimed by unaimed fire, a pretty hopeless task. Hence train your men to use their eyes for seeing and their tongues for description.

(e) Accustoming the men to judge distance, and use their backsights without orders. Judging distance for the men as a formal practice is confined to ranges under 800 yards, but it does no harm to let them judge greater ranges. Let the unit commanders define targets to be fired at, omitting to state the range, and let the men

judge it for themselves and fire. Walk up the line and see that no man forgets to adjust his backsight for the distance he estimates. If possible, have the correct ranges taken previously with a range finder, and let the men know what they are after they have aimed. Each change of target gives the men a useful lesson in judging distance.

(f) Having put the men through all sorts of paces in the way of firing while advancing and retiring, in quick time do the same thing again, but with the movements in double time, and, in addition, carry out the increases and decreases of the extension, inclines and changes of direction given in I.T., 93, throughout insisting on the same steadiness in firing as when in quick time. All this will at first probably get the men "rattled," and the benefit of it is that after some of it they will get over being "rattled," and will not let hurried orders or speed of movement interfere with deliberation and steadiness in shooting.

EXERCISE IV.

THE ASSAULT.

Exercise III. can suitably be wound up by a practice in delivering an assault, as this does not take long, and the moral may be pointed that all fire training is only a preparation for a successful assault. The fixing of bayonets before assault commonly leads to a complete cessation of fire in the firing line. This is quite wrong, as such complete cessation of fire by the firing line must largely surrender for the time being that superiority of fire which facilitates the delivery of the assault (I.T., 121 (7)), for it gives the enemy a chance to take aim again. Supporting fire by artillery or infantry not in the firing line cannot be relied on when the firing line has reached assaulting distance. Therefore, do not have a simultaneous fixing of bayonets, but let one-half fix while the other fires, and the best arrangement is evidently one that ensures a fire being kept up along the whole front and not in patches. The system I have found most satisfactory is to fix bayonets by ranks, the front rank

fixing while the rear rank continues firing, and then the rear rank fixing while the front rank fires. It may be done by odd and even files, or other ways, but, the company being organised in files, the same men are usually in the front and rear rank, and there is no difficulty in their remembering which they are. The important thing is to adhere to one system once it is adopted, and have it well understood by all. It does not matter much if a few men fix bayonets out of turn, so long as the fire is merely diminished and not stopped during the time bayonets are being fixed. In the charge, the men should work by their files, i.e., the two men of each file should act together and run at the same objective. The meaning of this is that in actual conflict two men would go together for the same individual enemy, and between the two of them they would be pretty sure to bring him to an untimely end, if the enemy really waited for the steel, and with less chance of his doing damage than if the combat took place man-to-man; thereafter they could turn their attentions to some other person.

For the practice choose and indicate any position for assault; work sections up to about two hundred yards from it, and then order rapid fire and

bayonets to be fixed. As soon as all are ready, order the charge to be sounded. (I.T., 124). When the men hear the bugle they must at once jump from their cover and go straight and hard at the position; there must be no waiting by individuals to fire a last shot or two. The rush should be made suddenly and swiftly, so that the enemy has no time to see what is happening before the men are well on their way at him. When the position is reached, pass right through it and well beyond it, to escape hostile gunfire (I.T., 124 (5)), and then order the "Halt," when the men may lie down under cover and open a pursuing fire. Walk along the line and see, with the help of non-commissioned officers, whether men of each file are together; if so, it will be proof that they have obeyed the directions to keep together during the charge. Allow a minute or two of the pursuing fire, then let section or platoon commanders sound their whistles, close and re-form their sections under cover. On the whistle-sound (a succession of short blasts), men rise and double to where the commander is, resume their places, and lie down. This re-organisation is very important for you as company commander, for by it you get your men formed up quickly into platoons

and ready to be closed into company or to take fresh orders in the minimum of time. The usual thing seen is that after the assault the ground is covered with a mixture of men of all companies staring about, and apparently thinking the show at an end, whereas on service this is the very time you may expect either a counter-attack by infantry or a burst of artillery fire directed on the lost position.

To repeat the orders of the assault: "Rapid Fire; Fix Bayonets; Charge; Halt and Take Cover; Commence Fire; Rally and Close Under Cover," and be ready for further happenings.

EXERCISE V.

THE SECTION AND PLATOON IN THE
ATTACK.

Having trained the individual men in the work needed of them, the next step is to make use of that individual skill to the best effect in combination under orders of a commander. The section is the lowest unit recognised for *training* (I.T., 107), and it also is the normal unit used in firing (I.T., 6 (4)). When the company is advancing in the attack, or retiring, its sections and platoons will often be widely separated from each other, and the company commander cannot look after each one in detail, so that the platoon commanders, and under them the section commanders, must be fully competent to lead their men without supervision, in accordance with the general intention given them before the company opened out. So the training of men in combination must be accompanied by the training of your section and platoon commanders.

The duties of fire unit commanders are laid down in I.T., 116 (5), and those of

section commanders in I.T., 116 and 123 (10). Before you proceed with this exercise have up these non-commissioned officers and devote ten minutes to an exposition of what is contained in the above paragraphs. Dilate on them, and show how neglect of those duties hampers the company commanders. At the same time, desire them to maintain among the men during sectional exercises the standard of individual training which was obtained in the preliminary exercises. Unless they do so the men will soon cease to apply what they then learnt, and so forget it in battle until the occurrence of casualties impresses its value afresh in their minds. Also give them the gist of what follows as to the advance and description of fire phases.

The exercise gives commanders the opportunity of doing what they will have to do when the company is attacking or retiring, but without their having to keep an eye on the movements of the other platoons. The men should now be extended at full intervals as on service, five or six yards apart, this being held to be the most that is needed. Put out the skeleton enemy in groups, one group as objective of attack for each section or platoon on parade, and the groups sufficiently apart to prevent them interfering with each other when extended as above, for they are to act

independently. Take up the advance as if at fourteen hundred from the enemy, when his rifle fire on open ground would compel you to change from small columns of sections or platoons into the line of extended men (I.T., 118 (5)). The advance up to assaulting distance, from fourteen hundred yards, consists (I.T., 121 (7)), in the first place, of an advance to fire positions. Now Musketry Regulations lay down that fire by less than two platoons is of little effect over one thousand yards, so do not encourage commanders to open fire till one thousand yards at least, and use the space fourteen hundred to one thousand yards for instruction in getting their sections or platoons forward as quickly, and with as little exposure, as possible. Secondly, the advance consists of a fire fight combined with further advances up to the assaulting position. In this fire fight controlled collective fire is better than individual fire (I.T., 116 (7) (iii)), so up to six hundred yards let firing take place, only on the specific orders of commanders, who accordingly are to name the targets and ranges. In this phase therefore make them choose forward fire positions and work their units forward, using controlled collective fire at the same time.

Under six hundred yards it is apparently

held best to accept the inevitable and allow individual fire, the unit commanders being still responsible for getting their men forward up to the position of assault—about two hundred yards from the enemy. Still at this close range unit commanders should do what they can to direct the fire, and especially they should see that men fire slowly and carefully. In general the rate of firing or snapping is far too fast, and pouches would be empty long before the assaulting position would be reached.

Owing to the great importance of training the sections, it is advisable to let them do this exercise, though both the phases below, separately from each other, and not in platoon. When they know all about it, let them work in platoon.

Having drawn up your sections in line at fourteen hundred yards, order the section commanders to extend and move on, and signal the skeleton enemy to open fire.

First Phase: Fourteen to One Thousand Yards, Gaining Ground Without Firing.

Practise the section commanders in all ways of getting their sections forward without undue exposure or delay, by rushes of the whole section, man-by-man from one and both flanks and by files, together, and any other way

that suggests itself. Stand over the section commanders in turn and tell them to advance the section by one method and then by another, and ask them which seems most suitable for various conditions of fire and ground (I.T., 118 (4)). The advance should be steady and determined. Before starting the advance from one position to another, section commanders are to decide and *must tell the men* to what point they mean the next advance to be made (I.T., 108 (2)), in the same way as individual men were taught to mark their next halting places.

Attention must be paid to the way in which advances are inaugurated. Rushes must be sudden and simultaneous (I.T., 92 (5)). The men have been trained to leave their cover quickly. The unit commander must give his directions for the next move without getting up (if himself lying) and tell the men to be prepared; when all are ready, he and the men must jump up together and rush at once on the word or signal. The object of this, of course, is to avoid a concentrated fire being directed on the unit commander, and, perhaps, the two or three men nearest him, if they get up before the others, which would make it likely that some of them

would be hit immediately, while the rest of the unit looked for a new leader, and so no advance take place; whereas if everyone gets on the move together a casualty or two will not bring the whole to a standstill. Of course, commanders should lead the way, but they must get in front by sprinting the first few yards.

Second Phase: One thousand to Six Hundred Yards (Collective Fire) and Six Hundred to Two Hundred Yards (Individual Fire).

As soon as a section begins to fire, it becomes possible for it to practise the lessons in the use of fire which were learnt in Exercise III., such as concentration and distribution of fire. From one position the commander must choose his next fire position, and work his section up to it in whatever way is most suitable. On flat and open ground this position may simply be the halting place of the next rush, thirty or forty paces to the front, but it is more instructive and practical to have positions far enough from each other, say one hundred and fifty or two hundred yards, to necessitate the advancing section making several successive rushes and using various devices to gain ground without attracting the enemy's attention. Practise

sections in all ways of advancing from one position to another, as was done before firing began, and encourage the use of covered ways. This exercise, if properly done, represents what the section would have to do in battle. For the purpose of instruction, the unit commanders should be allowed to move about as instructors, but when all ranks have been through the exercise and know what is needed, you should practise it under service conditions, and tell unit commanders to behave as if under fire; this is important, as it lets all see how much will be asked of the individual man under fire, and how difficult it is to exercise any wide control.

For the same reason you must in this exercise begin the practice of ordering casualties of leaders, and carry it on through the whole of the rest of the training. Order section commanders to be casualties, and let the next senior man carry on, then order that man to become a casualty, and let the next one take command. Collect these casualties with you and let them go round with you, and have for a time the onlooker's view of the game. Do not stint in ordering them, but let every man be ready to take up command. This readiness to assume command and to carry on the advance in

spite of the absence of leaders is most valuable in battle and on parade for training, keeps men's attention fixed on the business, and helps to counteract disorder when companies and sections get mixed up in reinforcement in battalion attack.

Under six hundred yards let the men use individual fire, choosing their own targets; at this time try to get them into the way of looking for the targets which most require to be shot at at the moment—they must be always looking along the enemy's line, and must not acquire the paralysing habit of only seeing straight in front of themselves.

Call on unit commanders to keep in view the question of expenditure of ammunition. It is no good ordering men to snap-fire 200 times in the course of an advance when they would only have 100 rounds in their pouches on service, and no means of getting more; when blank is being used they should see that the ammunition of casualties is collected and redistributed.

At some time in the course of this exercise the section must be practised in improving cover as if under fire, i.e., working lying down. The nature of the work depends on what tools you have, but it should be attempted if possible. Order the section to do it when halted together

in some fire position. At first they will shape badly and expose themselves a lot, but if you have time for practice they get into the way of digging in very quickly. If there are stones pile up "schanzes." Attention should be paid to concealment of the cover, so as not to make it a target for the whole countryside, and it must give cover from fire or view, or both; one often sees men making molehills which show up their position without being capable of stopping a bullet. Better not make them at all than that way.

Wind up the advance occasionally by an assault, as it is a mistake to let the idea take hold that the fire fight is the end of all things. This, I think, is the reason that the word "skirmishing" has disappeared from the book of training, as it connoted an indecisive action, whereas the whole spirit of the present training is that it shall be directed to the delivery of an assault and the ousting of the enemy from his position. Scouts are the only people who may have to skirmish in the former accepted meaning of the word, and they only do so until the firing line joins them, or they withdraw after reconnoitring.

In Platoon.

Next work the sections together in their platoons on similar lines. Practise

again all ways of gaining ground; by rushes of the whole platoon, or if one or more sections, man by man, and so on, as taught to the section. Fire should be directed by the platoon commander, and controlled by the section commander. Teach the lateral distribution of fire along a given front among the four sections of the platoon. Teach also the principle of covering fire, one section being sent to make its way with every use of cover to a forward fire position, while the remainder continue firing. The first section, on arrival at the new fire position, opens fire, and the others follow in due course, one section only being dumb while the movement is in progress. If there is a choice of good lines of advance it is better that sections should not follow each other on one line, as the enemy may have noticed the move and be waiting for them.

EXERCISE VI.

THE SECTION AND PLATOON IN
RETIREMENT.

For the general principles of retirements see I.T., 137. The platoon, when working with the company, will take its turn at being the rearmost portion of the troops, and will have the difficult task of getting away while in touch with the enemy, but its retirement will be covered by the fire of other portions of the company. On the other hand, if a platoon or section finds itself beyond support from other troops, as might happen often enough, it will have to act itself as a rearguard and retire by alternate parts.

In both cases great advantage is gained if the position held can be vacated so stealthily that the enemy shall not be aware of its having been vacated till the defenders are well on their way to the rear. For this reason it will be worth while to accustom the men to employ, when practicable, a procedure used in mountain warfare, withdrawing the bulk of men first and leaving only a few quick-footed men to keep up appearances and

fire as long as possible and then retiring them at speed. Also all men must be taught to grovel backwards on their stomachs from the crest of their fire position till sufficiently under cover, if there is cover, to stand up without being seen, after which they rise and make off.

Send out the skeleton enemy with instructions to follow up the retirement slowly, and not to close in on the sections, as it is easy and tempting to do this when there are no bullets in the rifles.

(a) As a Section or Platoon Acting with the Company.

Do the practice first by sections and then in platoon. Draw up the unit on a fire position about eight hundred yards from the enemy, the men in extended order, lying down, and open fire on the enemy. Tell the commander to choose his next halting place and retire his unit on it, which he should do on the lines before indicated. The halting places should be chosen as far apart as two to four hundred yards; short retirements merely prolong the time exposure to fire and should not be used unless the enemy are very close or the fire very heavy. Once the men are clear of the position, they should move as fast as they can, trusting to escape casualties,

by speed, the alteration of range, and the fire of the few men left on the position. As a rule, carry out all retirements at the double, so that the men shall not be confused by the hasty movement. As soon as the first party has reached the new position, the fringe of men left on the old one should creep back and go as hard as they can to rejoin their section or platoon, and they should be taught to judge the time of going for themselves, so as not to "let in" the section or themselves, by going too early or staying too late. Repeat the movement to one or two further positions. It is a strenuous practice and makes demands on the men's limbs, wind, and willingness, but the rearguard is the post of honour and danger. Order casualties of leaders from time to time, and let the men be called to move in quick time sometimes, which they would have to do if there were signs of unsteadiness.

(b) As a Section or Platoon Acting Alone.

Act on the same lines as before, but let the commander run the show, which he should be able to do, after having done it under supervision. One party (a file or two in the case of a section, or one or two sections in that of a platoon) gets

back to a fire position and opens fire to cover the retirement of the other. In general, it is better that both parties should not fall back on one and the same fire position; on the contrary, if they act on a wide front in ordinary country—say, three hundred yards apart—their fire is equally effective, but the enemy is broken up, and the danger of their being out-flanked or surrounded is less. For the same reason it is good practice, if the platoon is strong, to send out groups of four or five men still further on the flanks, and a group to precede the whole on the line of retirement by six hundred yards or so, in order to occupy positions and deny them to the enemy, and after one or two turns of this exercise tell the skeleton enemy to follow on harder and try to work round the flanks. In this part also continue to order casualties of leaders.

EXERCISE VII.

THE SECTION AND PLATOON IN
INDEPENDENT ATTACK.

It is very important to secure the intelligent co-operation of section and platoon commanders in the operations in which their company or battalion is taking part. I have read that in the Russo-Japanese War the result of one of the battles—I think at Penlin, 31st July—turned on the action of an infantry section who gained a footing on the extreme flank of the Russian line, and drove off the defenders in the immediate vicinity, opened a way for the advance of the greater numbers, and led to the outflanking and retreat of the whole Russian force. If you give your unit commanders some chances of carrying out attacks, acting as if unsupported by other troops, they will find themselves faced with the same problems which confront commanders of larger bodies in the attack, and they will be more likely, when acting in combination, to look beyond just the limits of their own commands; they will be led to comprehend the object of operations and the

difficulties in the way, and will become quick to seize any opportunity to further the general plan without waiting for orders. It is true that so small a body as a section would seldom be formally told to attack an objective single-handed, but there are often occasions on service when a platoon might have to carry out an attack on a small scale, as when a few of the enemy's riflemen are making themselves unpleasant, while not in sufficient force to do more than "snipe," or to require the diversion against them of a whole company. Though a section as now constituted is a very small unit to work with, I think no excuse is needed for performing the attack with the smallest unit, having in view the excellent training it forms for non-commissioned officers and men. However, for this practice, it is advisable to form sections somewhat above the usual strength, by joining two together, so as to give at least eighteen rifles in the whole. After having put the sections through the exercise, you will, of course, let the platoon commanders carry out the attack with their platoons.

Put out a skeleton enemy of three or four men for each platoon or section, or one only for all to attack in turn, and post this enemy in some commanding place, with a good field of view and

fire so that if possible the unit shall have twelve to eight hundred yards to manœuvre over before coming to close quarters. As an example, give out the supposition that this enemy are a cavalry patrol of the enemy, who have dismounted and are using their rifles on the company as it is on the move from somewhere to somewhere else. The section or platoon is ordered to drive them off, neutralise their fire, or hold them in check, in case they should be the forerunners of a greater number. The enemy should begin to fire on a signal from you (with your flag), which you should give as you tell off the commander for the duty. If the other units are to attack the same enemy in turn, you should halt them under cover or turn them to the rear, so as not to see too much of the method the first lot choose to carry out their job.

The method of the attack will depend on the nature of the ground—what suits one case may not suit another, and there may be two or three courses open in attacking any one position. The commander should accordingly look well at the ground before deciding how he will carry out the attack, but there are certain principles common to attacks, great or small, which he should put into practice.

He should secure himself from interruption on his flanks and rear, and he should provide a supporting fire to distract the enemy and cover the advance of his main force. He cannot make large detachments or indulge in wide patrolling, nor would such small bodies as platoons be sent off to attack if such were advisable; but, at least he can post a file or two on some high ground, or, failing that, on one flank out of decisive range of the enemy, i.e., about eight hundred yards from him, with orders to keep up a steady fire until his advance masks their fire. This will prevent, or at least give warning of, an attempt to cut in on the rear. He may also send a file perhaps two or three hundred yards to either flank, to move parallel with his advance and prevent his being enfiladed at short range, if the enemy should be tactless enough to avail himself of a chance of meeting the advance by a counter-attack. Until he sees pretty well what he has in front of him, he should divide his party into two, sending one to engage the enemy and keeping the other as a reserve to support the first by fire if they get into difficulties, and to be available to carry on the attack after the other has got the enemy well busy, either by reinforcing it directly, or, better still, by

continuing the advance along a fresh line leading to some position from which the enemy can be finally turned out, either by fire or by a charge, the first half joining in and advancing as soon as the enemy has turned his attention to the new attack. Both parties should keep scouts or a patrol of some sort out in front of them until the foreground is proved not to contain any hidden body of the enemy, or until the opening of fire by their own side makes it necessary for the scouts to merge into the firing line. I have seen on service a half-company go off to take post as a piquet on a long ridge; it neglected the above precautions, beyond having some scouts in front. There were four or five of the enemy on the ridge, and they waited till the scouts were close, shot some down and drove the others to cover, and then turned their fire on to the half-company, who were also driven to ground, and, as there was little cover, they were tied up till set free by some more infantry, who had to be specially sent off to move along the ridge. Had the half-company moved in two portions, the first would have contained this weak enemy, and the rear party could easily have circled round and got on to the ridge farther along, which would at once have caused the enemy to clear

out. See F.S.R., I., 1, as to the results of the violation of the principles of leading troops, and as therein directed, impress the principles taught on the minds of your non-commissioned officers, who are commanders, albeit only of platoons and sections.

EXERCISE VIII.

THE PLATOON AS AN ADVANCED GUARD
AND AS A FLANK GUARD.

(a) When the company is on the march, it should always be preceded by an advanced guard—either a party of scouts, or, more usually, by one of the platoons. After the advanced guard comes in contact with the enemy its further action becomes either an attack to drive off the enemy, or a defence to delay his advancing, according to his strength and tactics; so I propose here merely to indicate suitable formations of march in ordinary, i.e., non-mountainous country, so that the platoons may be practised in taking them up without delay on being told off for the duty. The exercise takes little time, and can be done on the same parade as the flank guard exercise.

An advanced guard may come under fire at any moment, and to provide against surprise (F.S.R., 64), its leading portions may move in extended order. The duties are given in F.S.R., 68, and apply quite completely to so small a body as a platoon. The platoon should be

divided into a vanguard and a main guard. For the vanguard, a common plan is simply to extend a section on either side of the road, but I prefer to divide the section into three patrols, or more if strength permits, who work along in a general line—one to search the road and its immediate vicinity, and one on each side. The nature of the country regulates the breadth of ground the centre patrol can search from the road, and the distance to which the others are sent out on each side. The other sections follow as main guard, not so close as to be at once mixed up with the vanguard if fire is opened on the latter, nor so far as to be unable to support it quickly with fire. The advanced guard is responsible for keeping touch with the main body (the company) (F.S.R., 64 (4)), but the company commander should satisfy himself that this is being done. If view is restricted, the main guard must drop a connecting file to keep connection. This file must march with their beards on their shoulders, to see what the company is doing, and let the commander know, and also to signal to the company, if the platoon has had to halt. If the country is open, the commander should still tell off a file for this duty, who will march with the platoon, but be continually on the

look-out to the rear. The platoon commander ought, of course, to keep a watch himself, but may have other things to attend to, and it is well to take precautions against the platoon either getting too far in front or letting the company get too close to it, by marching on while the platoon is investigating some suspicious locality.

(b) The Platoon as a Flank Guard.

A platoon may sometimes be used as a flank guard, as when a small convoy is on the march with only a company or two as escort. Flank guards are dismissed in a few words in F.S.R., 70. It is worth while to practise them once or twice to avoid delay in taking up the formation when the march is being started, or in improvising a method of fighting off the enemy if he attacks.

Represent the convoy or whatever it is by a man with a red flag to move along the road; the platoon is then to move along parallel to the road, and far enough off to afford protection from effective rifle fire, i.e., at least eight hundred yards in open country. The skeleton enemy should be instructed to keep about the same distance again on the flank beyond the platoon, and to move along parallel with it

without closing in, opening fire on an agreed signal.

The march formation should be on the same principles as those for the advanced guard. The platoon should move in two bodies, and patrols or scouts should precede it, both in the direction of the march and towards the flank which is being guarded. It is important to keep touch with the main body by connecting files at all times, otherwise if the road changes direction out of view of the flank guard it may separate them too far or bring them too close to the company.

The method of fighting merely to hold off the enemy resembles that used by a rear guard for the same purpose, i.e., fire and movement by alternate portions. When the enemy opens fire on your signal, the patrol on the flank either falls back, or the platoon reinforces it. The patrol in the line of advance should still continue to precede the movements of the platoon in that direction, and should be told to conform to its movement. The platoon replies to the enemy's fire as soon as possible and begins the lateral fight—one half is sent, if possible under cover, to take up a fire position farther along the direction of the line of march, preceded by the patrol, which, to some extent, secures it from surprise from that direc-

tion. As soon as the leading party has found a fire position and opens its fire, the other follows it, and either halts alongside it, so allowing it to go off to a new position, or continues its movement beyond it and takes up a third position to cover the further movements. The latter method is the quicker, as it saves the time of replacing men of the first party in their fire position by those of the second. The exercise need not be prolonged, as a few of these lateral movements are quite sufficient illustration to enable the men in future to take up their duty quickly.

EXERCISE IX.

PRELIMINARY FOR THE ATTACK BY THE
COMPANY IN BATTALION.

A company attacking as part of the battalion is sure to find the men of different platoons mixed up in the course of the attack with those of other platoons, both of that company and of others. Before practising the attack, accompanied with this mixture of platoons, it is advisable to train them and their non-commissioned officers for their duties without allowing any mixing up. This may be done by bringing all the platoons of the company up into one line, and then extending each on its own ground. The result is that each platoon may be taken to represent the leading platoon of four companies told off to furnish the firing line and supports (I.T., 122). The four platoons form thus the firing line, the other three supposititious platoons of each company being in support. This formation would be taken up when the enemy's rifle fire began to be effective, i.e., at or under fourteen hundred yards. Within this distance the firing line has to press

on through the zones in which it uses collective and individual fire up to assaulting distance, being reinforced as needed, firstly by the supports, and finally at the time of the assault by all or part of the local reserve, which, in this case, would be composed of the four companies of the battalion not detailed to furnish the firing line and supports.

Put out a skeleton enemy with orders to remain in one position, and fire slowly, but continuously. Draw up the four platoons, or as many as are present of the company at fourteen hundred yards or so from the enemy, in one line and at sufficient intervals to allow of their extending to five paces, *plus* some space between flanks of sections after extension, to allow plenty of choice of lines of advance. Indicate to each platoon a part of the enemy's position which it is to regard as its final objective of assault (I.T., 121 (3)). Have the men extended to five paces, and carry out the attack right through on the lines of Exercise V., and finish with an assault and rally after it. Each company would have an officer with its platoon in the firing line to direct the fire. If fire is opened between fourteen hundred and one thousand yards, it will not be effective against ordinary targets unless the whole four platoons direct their fire

on the same target. Under one thousand yards fire should be controlled by section commanders and directed by platoon commanders.

Practise concentration of the fire of the four platoons on one part of the enemy's line and lateral distribution of fire *within the limits of that part*. Give each platoon a fraction of this fraction of the enemy's frontage to deal with, and let the platoon commander again tell off his sections to fire at various marks inside *his* limits. Again switch the fire of all four platoons on to some other particular bit of the enemy's position, as done in previous exercises.

To do this you must introduce and work with thoroughness a system of inter-communication (I.T., 119), but it should be one approved and adopted by your battalion commander, otherwise each company of the battalion may be found using a different one. It is to be understood that orders as to the direction of fire in no way interfere with the gaining of ground to the front, a platoon firing at one object ceases fire in order to advance, but resumes its fire on the same object when it again halts.

As soon as section fire is opened, encourage mutual support, some part of the line firing while others advance, and make

section commanders continue to observe this principle.

At some one parade for this exercise halt the whole line during the attack and practise entrenching under fire, the men working lying down (I.T., 121 (13)). Thereafter resume the advance.

Move about yourself and let your section commanders do so also, and check any slovenly work on the part of the men in using, quitting, or getting into cover, and in the use of their rifles and judging distance if, as should often be done, it is left to them to estimate how far they are from the target of the moment.

EXERCISE X.

THE COMPANY IN ATTACK WITH THE
BATTALION UNDER ARTILLERY FIRE.

When the battalion is moving forward to attack, and before the enemy's rifle fire is more than a distant and future danger, that of his artillery becomes an imminent and formidable menace as soon as the limits of its range are crossed, because of the suddenness with which it is capable of dealing destruction. Whether his artillery actually opens on the battalion is another matter. If the battalion shows up as a tempting target in column of route or mass, he most certainly will fire on it, but if it is skilfully led it may possibly escape his notice altogether; at the same time, it is hardly likely that it can move from five thousand to fourteen hundred yards from the enemy's infantry without giving some indications of its movement, and the probability is, that at some part of the advance it will find itself the recipient of the enemy's attention. To escape the effect of this fire, the battalion and the company will have to break up into small shallow columns

such as platoons or sections at least 50 yards from each other laterally (I.T., 118) and two hundred yards from front to rear; in fact, a lot of little groups of men sufficiently apart to prevent the burst of one shell covering more than one group. The advance in this order constitutes the first phase of the infantry attack. The company must be practised in getting into this formation, and moving in it so as to avoid confusion in action, and also to let non-commissioned officers and men understand that this formation does not free them from the control of their commander.

At manœuvres and exercises the adoption of this formation is sometimes burked on various pretexts, of which the most heinous is to say that the results of artillery fire are overrated, and the risk run in keeping in closed formation is more than compensated for by the comfort of the men, maintenance of control and saving of time. This theory I fancy had its origin in the South African War, where the Boer artillery was skilful but exiguous, if judged by European standards. I have not been under shell fire myself, but I have seen the results of it on a column of about two hundred men who came along a watercourse two thousand yards or so from the guns, in

something resembling a march formation. The guns had the range, and the enemy left about fifty dead in that watercourse in a few minutes, so personally I am going to open out my company and trust to my peace training of it to keep it in hand and get it along fast enough to be on the spot when wanted.

I need hardly give details how to practise this. The point is, to get the company opened out quickly and without confusion, and this is to be done by telling your platoon commanders what you want and where they are to go, and not by any drill. Platoons may further split up into columns of sections. Leave it to your platoon commanders to have the sections moved apart to intervals of fifty yards. If the enemy's artillery is straight in front, a diamond formation seems suitable—a platoon at each angle—the length of the diagonal front to rear being over two hundred yards and side to side over one hundred; or the platoons may simply follow each other at two hundred yards distance, though this is not a very handy arrangement. But, subject to keeping the distances large enough, it is not the formation that matters, but the way it is taken up, and I will leave it at that.

At the end of this phase of endurance of the enemy's artillery fire the company

comes under rifle fire and has to take to extended order, and on service it would perhaps have to do this and plunge into the attack without the platoons closing in from the scattered formation in which they have so far moved. But for the first few times you should close up at fourteen hundred yards and start from there, so as to tell the men what is next to be done when they come under rifle fire, and in any case the size of your exercise ground would probably necessitate your doing the two phases over more or less the same bit of ground.

EXERCISE XI.

THE COMPANY IN ATTACK WITH THE
BATTALION, UNDER RIFLE FIRE.

The immediate objects of the fire fight within effective rifle range are to produce a fire sufficiently heavy to overcome the fire of the defence, and to reach a position from which the assault can be delivered (I.T., 121 (5 and 6)). In theory, then, the desideratum is to get so many men up to about two hundred yards from the enemy that they form a line practically shoulder to shoulder, in order that their fire may be at least as heavy as that of the enemy, if the latter are also in one continuous line, and in default of circumstances admitting of effective covering fire being maintained from positions in rear or on a flank. On this supposition it is frequently argued that a battalion and its companies, when advancing to the attack, should do so on a front not greater than that which the battalion would occupy if it were in single rank, but this does not really follow. The nature of the ground may be such that to attempt

to build up a shoulder-to-shoulder firing line all along the enemy's position within charging distance, may be merely to send men to useless destruction by exposing them on fire-swept spaces, where they are sure to be knocked over before they can do any good. On the other hand, there may be other points where men may be massed so as to give not only a firing line of maximum density, but also a supporting force both to replace casualties and to carry out the assault. These are the points which it is of importance to gain and hold in strength sufficient to carry out the object of the attack—the assault. It is the duty of the battalion commander to give each of his firing line companies some such point as their objective, and to define the frontage and direction of their attack. It is similarly the duty of the commander of a firing line company to give each of his sections an objective within the limits assigned to his company (I.T., 122 (4) and 123 (3)). The problem for solution is, how to get to those points, and so it does not appear to matter much what frontage the battalion and its companies occupy when they start off for the attack at the fourteen hundred yards limit of effective rifle fire, provided of course, they do not encroach on the frontage of other units. Indeed, an attack

which starts on a wide base and concentrates only in its later stages seems much more likely than one which starts from base equal to a single rank frontage to keep the enemy uncertain of its objective, and to be able to bring oblique or enfilade fire to bear on portions of his line. Therefore, when practising the company in attack, do not be bound by cast iron rules as to the breadth of the zone of ground within which you are to bring your company from fourteen hundred yards up to the charging position. Four platoons following one straight behind the other, at two hundred yards distance, make a very unwieldy procession, and, in general, I would advise you to use something in the nature of a diamond formation at first, the three platoons in rear making their own way forward till they reinforce the leading portion which finally consists of the whole company.

Put out the skeleton enemy on a front of, roughly, what your company will occupy in single rank, and let the position, if possible, have within it two, or at most, three points, which you can assign as objectives to the platoon commanders. You must consider this position as having been assigned to you as objective by your battalion commander, the ground on the right and left of it being the prey of other

companies, and not the object of your assault, though it should, nevertheless, frequently be the object of your *fire* during the advance.

Draw up the company at about fourteen hundred yards from the enemy. Tell the platoon commanders the relative positions the platoons are to take up when the advance begins, roughly the distances between them (I.T., 123 (7)), the direction of the attack, if the enemy's position is not quite clearly to be seen, the frontage on which the company is free to manœuvre, and the points which the sections are to regard as their objectives; the details contained in I.T., 123 and 124, may also be enumerated if the commanders are not experienced. As regards these details, I recommend that scouts be formed not in a line of men extended at wide intervals, but as a line of patrols of four or six men each, and you or a subaltern should halt them early in the attack and tell them to send back word that they are held up by fire, or that they have defined the enemy's position; on this the nearest platoon reinforces them, and the process of building up the firing line begins from that point. As regards inter-communication, use connecting files and semaphore signalling to join up the various parts and make real use of them, but avoid sham messages.

As soon as the object and manner of the attack have been detailed to all, tell the platoon commanders to move off their platoons to their positions and extend them ready to advance, and the scouts to get off in front. Five paces is the least extension to ensure that a bullet aimed at one man may miss him with a fair chance of not hitting his neighbour. Do not let the scouts go too far away, because at this time of getting to grips with the enemy, their usefulness, when acting with their companies is mainly limited to guarding against ambush at close range, and as ground scouts to prevent the company coming against some unseen obstacle, barbed wire, donga, canal, or what not.

As soon as all are in position, the company may be considered as being in the formation in which it would have arrived at the point where, in addition to the enemy's artillery fire, it comes under heavy and fairly accurate rifle fire. Give the signal to advance, and let the platoon commanders begin to work their platoons forward, using what covered ways they can find. After a little of this, have the scouts halted and reinforce them by one platoon, order fire to be opened, bearing in mind that one platoon's fire is probably useless at over one thousand yards from the enemy, but if your company is in the

diamond formation the platoons on each flank will probably be able to fire, and with favourable ground, e.g., a knoll, or bluff somewhere on the line of advance, the rear platoon also will be able to fire over the heads of the firing line. There is no danger in this if the men hold their rifles straight, and it would assuredly be done in war. I have myself seen it, and the chances of an accident are minimised by practice in peace. During this early opening of fire use every effort to keep the fire from being merely a make-believe, i.e., send word round by your connecting files or semaphore to fire at certain targets, and see that section commanders direct their fire accordingly. In battle the information as to which part of the enemy's position seemed most to demand attention would, of course, reach you from those of your side who were suffering fire coming from that part of the position, and the result of your passing the word to fire at it as above would be that a shower of bullets would come dropping all round it, to the upsetting of the aim of the hostile marksmen. Under cover of this fire your firing line may be allowed to gain a little ground, platoons moving alternately so as to avoid a cessation of fire. Thereafter continue to gain ground, and gradually reinforce the firing

line till all your supports are absorbed and the whole company is in the firing line. When this has taken place the line will consist of a mixture of men of different sections and platoons. Avoid unreal movements in attempting to keep the men of each unit together in reinforcing and recognise that admixture is unavoidable. (L.T., 93 (11) and 123 (9)). The organising of the resultant disorder is one of the essential objects of training for the attack. Make your section commanders call on the men to right and left of them, if they are nearer them than any other unit commander, to act under their orders. Thus: "Private A to Private J under my orders." Have this done constantly till it becomes a matter of course. The men of files can always hang together, but prove that this is being done by asking men where their file mates are. Get this system started as soon as reinforcement is begun, and keep it in full swing throughout. Once it is started, these extemporized fire units must apply the principles learnt by the intact sections and squads in Exercise IX., i.e., supporting fire by part to cover movement of the others, control and distribution of fire, etc., and so work on up to assaulting distance and deliver an assault. After this, let section and

platoon commanders reform their men and units as quickly as possible, and then reform the company under your own orders. At subsequent parades introduce casualties among the section and platoon commanders, and let the senior privates in each of the mixed up fire units step into their places and carry on the attack without halt or confusion.

EXERCISE XII.

THE COMPANY IN ATTACK ACTING
ALONE.

On service a company may often have to attack some post of the enemy without having the support of either artillery or infantry, and exercises framed to illustrate these conditions are very useful in developing the initiative of all ranks. In paragraph V. of the preamble I gave an example, and I think, if you will peruse it again, you will see what sort of thing you should arrange for the exercise. At inspections one sometimes sees a company sent off by itself to carry out such an attack, and the method often adopted is to tell off the company into the firing line and supports, and, perhaps, a reserve. The whole then go straight for the object and perform a sort of travesty of what the company does when acting as part of a battalion. By this time I trust you will be quick to perceive that this is just what it ought not to do. As an isolated force it has to do much more than simply to form a firing line and bring off an assault. It must secure its flanks, have a real

reserve, employ a flank as well as a frontal attack, provide for its own withdrawal if worsted, be prepared to deal with a counter-attack, and observe all the principles laid down in I.T., 121. *Mutatis mutandis*, your reserve may consist of only a platoon, your flank guards a file or two of men, your flank attacks a section or platoon with a subaltern accompanying it, and so on, but the precautions must be taken and the principles put into practice, or your attack would run risk of failure. You would do it all on service; therefore, do it all in peace. Carry out such exercises, carefully planned, and with observance of service conditions, and I am quite sure you will see what a great deal there is to be done in this direction before you feel yourself and your company quite competent to undertake a similar task in the field. That first exercise against a skeleton enemy will be the forerunner of many others. Your criticism of the action of your non-commissioned officers must be carefully considered, as there are usually several justifiable ways of doing a thing, and it should always be constructive and not merely destructive (T. & M.R., 2 (2)).

EXERCISE XIII.

THE COMPANY IN RETIREMENT.

The men have been practised in retirement in pairs in Exercise II., and the sections and platoons have also learned their part in Exercise VI. It remains to train the company for this duty, which it might have to do either as acting as rearguard to the battalion, whether the latter was, or was not, in conjunction with other troops, or as if effecting its withdrawal when isolated. In both cases the procedure and distribution are pretty much alike. In the former case, the company, if it gets into difficulties, *may* be able to get help from the rest of the force, but in the latter it will not be able to do so, and the commander should be especially careful to have in hand some portion of his company which he can use to extricate any detachment which gets "tied up." On the other hand, it is very desirable that the main body should not be called on to reinforce the rearguard when the company is not acting alone. So that in both cases you should be prepared to meet eventualities from your own resources. Again, a rearguard is

bound to have the majority of its force in action in order to hold back the enemy and present an appearance of force, so that it is not always possible to set apart a portion of so small a body as a company to act solely as reserve, and to remain continuously outside the actual combat. The solution of the difficulty seems to lie in an intelligent application of the principles of rearguard fighting given in F.S.R., 71 to 73, and the early but timeous withdrawal from the fighting line of a portion of the company who move back to a position in rear from which they can cover the withdrawal of the remainder, but are still available to be thrown into the fight, if it is necessary to inaugurate some sort of a counter attack to give portions heavily engaged a chance to break away from close grips. It is important in this exercise to teach non-commissioned officers and men to be ready to adopt quickly any method of withdrawal that may be ordered, because the nature of the ground must determine the way in which a withdrawal can best be effected, and the nature of the ground may vary every few hundred yards. Therefore I merely suggest some ways of practising retirements, and during the course of the exercise you should change from one to another, and also encourage commanders to act on their own initiative,

when, as will probably happen, your system of inter-communication fails to act with sufficient speed and accuracy. I.T., 137, gives general rules as to the action of platoons and sections, and the standard set up in Exercises II. and VI. should be adhered to. Send out the skeleton enemy with orders to follow up the retirement, but not to close in under six hundred yards.

(a) Get the whole company deployed into one line of platoons, with intervals between them, occupying a wide front, four to eight hundred yards, the men at five or more paces extension. This may seem too wide a front, but, after all, the intervals between the platoons are only two hundred and forty yards, and an enemy trying to break straight through the line would be under fire at one hundred and twenty yards or less, while a wide front is the best precaution against having your flanks turned and your retreat intercepted.

Send back a platoon from one of the flanks to take up quickly a position in rear clear away from the firing line ; three hundred to six hundred yards is not too much ; let it open fire, and let the remainder of the firing line work back by retirement of alternate sections, each running back thirty or forty yards, beginning this movement from the flank from which the first platoon

went, the platoon on the other flank holding on and only giving ground when the two centre platoons have got well on their way to the line on which the first platoon is halted. This is a slow retirement, but gives a maximum of continuous fire and the flanks are strong.

(b) With the whole company extended in one line, and no intervals between platoons. Retire by short rushes of alternate sections; the rushes must be quite short, twenty yards at most, so that the sections that have retired can fire through the intervals of the rear portion of the line the instant that it begins to retire. This is meant for use after an unsuccessful assault, and only on flat ground.

(c) With the company extended in one line, but with intervals between the platoons. Order the flank platoons to retire and take post to cover the withdrawal of the two centre platoons, who remain in position till the flank platoons are ready to open fire. Watch how the platoon commanders handle their platoons; they should do so artfully, as taught in Exercise VI.

(d) Retire by half-companies, two platoons together, using your subalterns as half-company commanders, and putting the onus of finding suitable covering positions

on them, merely telling them to cover each other's retirement.

(e) With the company all holding one position, leave the scouts or picked men to cover the retirement by rapid fire, and withdraw the remainder at full speed, then cover the retirement of the scouts by the fire of the whole from a position in rear. Watch that the scouts creep back from their cover without letting the enemy know they are going ; and of this screen of scouts the flank men ought usually to be the last to go in order to make the enemy believe that the position is still occupied.

EXERCISE XIV.

OUTPOSTS.

I.

The general rules for outposts and the part played by an outpost company are to be found in I.T., 147 to 157, and it is necessary accordingly to train for those duties in peace. Let us begin from the beginning, and see what infantry outposts are and what they have to do. A line of infantry outposts will very often have to be taken up after a day's fighting, or in close proximity to the enemy before a battle. The commander of an outpost battalion will be told by the staff to take up with his battalion a certain length of the front, say, from Farm A to Hill B, inclusive—perhaps a mile or even two in extent. He cannot possibly have time to ride all along the front and fix places for piquets and sentries. Instead of this, he looks at the ground and comes to the conclusion that it will require, say, all his four companies in the outpost line. He divides up his front into four parts, and gives each of

his companies one part. It is his duty to see that the eight companies form along the line that combines the best facilities for defence and reconnaissance to the front. Accordingly, he tells the captain of A Company to take from Farm A to, say, the wood X, inclusive, the captain of B Company from the wood X, exclusive, to, say, the stream ML, inclusive, and so along. The captains of companies then have to go off and take up their frontages. As beforesaid, infantry outposts must expect to take up their line close to the enemy, and often when dusk is falling. This gives you your clue as to how it should be done. You must march your company in fighting formation, so as not to be ambushed—a screen of scouts or other covering troops in front and on the flanks, a party, section, or platoon ready to succour the covering party, and hold up the enemy, and a reserve ready to act under your orders, either for attack or defence. Your movement and the taking up of your line should be unseen by the enemy; therefore, move carefully under cover both from distant and close positions, from which you may be seen. The line must be taken up quickly. The main thing is to get it occupied; therefore, it is a mistake to halt the company while you plod round the whole of the

front and plan just where each piquet and sentry will be. Instead, take a good look at the line as you march and decide what are the essential points to be held for defence and as observation points. As soon as your scouts have made good the ground a little in front of those points, send off what you think are necessary, sections or platoons, to seize these points, and act as piquets till you go round and adjust details. Thus your company will occupy the line in rough-and-ready fashion as quickly as they can advance. When the company breaks up to go to the piquet posts, go with any one of the piquets which is to be on one flank and settle the exact position of the piquet with reference to the line you intend to hold as your line of resistance, and any other details which you think the piquet commander should attend to, such as what localities should be patrolled, and estimate the number of men required. Any surplus sections should accompany you from this piquet, and you and they then go along the line to the other piquets which you arrange similarly, using the surplus to reinforce those piquets that need them, and if at the end you have still a surplus of men you may either form them as a support in rear or dismiss them to remain with their own platoons. For purposes of messing on service the latter is convenient, but, tactically,

a support is often needed, in which case the men's comfort must take second place.

You must make a clear distinction between day and night outposts, though you practise the latter by daylight. Infantry outposts by day and until the enemy advances, are firstly patrols and look-out men, whose business is to look for any movement on the part of the enemy, and to prevent his seeing their own side's doings, and to report what they see of the enemy's, and, secondly, a line of piquets who occupy the line decided on as the line of resistance, and who may fall out and rest while things are quiet, with supports and sometimes a reserve behind them. The patrols are active agents in getting information in front of the outpost line, and they will mostly consist of mounted troops except in close country or thick weather. The look-out sentries are passive obstacles to the enemy's patrols or scouts penetrating the line; the piquets are the reserve of force ready to be called into action when needed. But a line suitable for observation and resistance by day is seldom suitable by night also. Fighting by day is done by shooting, and rough ground affording cover is likely to be chosen for the advance of the attackers. By night, however, the attack will be

made with the bayonet, and the attacker will avoid broken country, which will confuse and delay his advance. Choose your outpost line accordingly. By day seek for a good field of fire, mutually supporting positions, and good facilities for observation, and strengthen the position you mean to fight on. By night close the likely ways by which an enemy may advance by putting piquets on them in strengthened positions with obstacles prepared in front, and patrols lying out on intervening ground to intercept scouts. Thus, in an undulating hedge-covered country with many roads, by day your piquets would be behind the crests of the undulations, sentries only on the look-out, and patrols scouting in front. By night your piquets would be on the roads, which they would block with barbed wire or abattis of cut hedge stuff, and your patrols in the fields between and lying out along the road in front at some place where they could watch anything passing, and get back to the piquet line without running risks of being shot by their own side. We will see below what training is required for non-commissioned officers and men in their duties on piquet, patrol and sentry. When you have trained them in these duties, take up an outpost line as a tactical exercise with your company, acting as

an outpost company by day, and then as by night, and if you have scouts send them out to act as an enemy's patrol in front to see how much of the operation of taking up the line is visible to them; then, after a certain hour, let them try to make their way through the line unseen. They must not work round the flanks as *ex hypothesi*; these are held by other outpost companies; finally, let them start sniping the outposts as if ushering in an attack, and let your piquets take up the line of resistance, your patrols falling back on the firing beginning.

II.

The Training of Men and Platoons in Outpost Duties.

An outpost company will more often consist of two or more small piquets of one or more platoons with a support, than simply of one large piquet with its support, so that when you come to train the whole company, as above, in taking up a part of an outpost line, the performance of the work will depend largely on the ability of your platoon and section commanders to direct the men in their duties. Unless they are capable of doing this, time will be wasted as you will be occupied with one portion of the line while

the rest are doing nothing and awaiting your arrival, for in this class of work the instructor must remain for some time with each piquet while the men are being put through the various duties, and cannot supervise concurrently at all points. Therefore, it is best, before taking the men out for instruction, to give a day or two solely to the instruction of subalterns and non-commissioned officers. When they have got a knowledge of what is required, have the men out, divide them into piquets under subalterns and section commanders, who will put them through the duties, and the work will go on on proper lines, and you will be free to go round and supervise each in turn.

You will have four subalterns, sixteen section commanders, and other non-commissioned officers, a total of twenty rifles or so, but if you are short of non-commissioned officers, have out enough privates to give you sixteen or twenty rifles. Form them up as a piquet and make the supposition that it has just received its orders to break off from the company and go to a certain point in the outpost line and take up its duties there.

Day Piquets.

Indicate some such point as a day piquet position at a reasonable distance from

where the piquet is when you give it its orders, and let the senior non-commissioned officer march it there, as on service, the point chosen being, if possible, such a one as would be occupied on service.

(a) This advance to the piquet is the first duty. In spite of the company covering troops being supposed to be somewhere in advance, the piquet on its march should be protected by a small patrol (F.S.R., 64 (1)). In taking up the position, it must not let the enemy see it; that is, neither the men nor their commander should show themselves. Very often the men are kept under cover, but the commander wanders about fixing places for sentries in full view of everyone. He should lie down and peep over the crest or whatever it is while making his plans.

Having arrived at the piquet position, indicate a position on the right and on the left where other piquets are supposed to be and proceed with:—

(b) Duties of outpost sentries.—These are given in I.T., 152. Post as many groups as will use up the whole strength in places which would need watching on service; if there are not enough such places near by, then merely for the purpose of this semi-drill, post two or more groups close together. A group consists of one or two men

on duty, and their reliefs, who lie down near them. These groups are relieved every eight or twelve hours. Let it be understood that the position of their own piquet is occupied by the reliefs of these groups and of patrols, and it is a good plan to show the position by a flag. The sentries must see without being seen, know where other groups are, where their own and other piquets are, be told to challenge and halt anyone approaching as in I.T., 152 (3), and what to do if attacked. Let them do this to you personally, as if you were someone not belonging to the troops, and impress on them that they must be careful to teach it to their men so that *no stranger may ever be allowed to get close* to a group, and to shoot if he does not halt. Neglect of this simple rule has led to many mishaps in all armies. Concealment is not easy, but must be got somehow—by artifice, if the ground is unfavourable. After putting all through “sentry go” close to the groups and teach them:—

(c) Patrolling, for which see I.T., 111 and 156. Patrols are not meant for fighting, but to get information or watch dangerous places. But they may have to fight to avoid capture, and they do no good by walking blindly into an ambush. To bring back information or news that

the enemy are coming on, it is evidently essential that whatever happens to the rest of the party, one man at least should always be able to escape, and to avoid ambush the patrol should move in a formation which will prevent a surprise overwhelming the whole party. In short, one portion must scout, and the other be prepared to cover their movement and help them to get away, if possible, but in any case to get away itself and carry news of the enemy. But patrols must be limited in strength, or they will not be able to escape notice, and must make up for their weakness by cunning and stealthiness of movement.

For patrolling by day, tell off the whole strength into patrols of four or six men, one of whom will command in each patrol. Let each take up the formation it would usually adopt; that is, one or two files in advance, followed by the rest at a distance sufficient to prevent the surprise of the whole by one and the same opening of fire. Teach the method advocated for movement across country, i.e., a careful but rapid advance from one cover to another, also how to approach suspicious localities. The leading file halts and looks for any signs of the enemy; meanwhile the rear file comes nearly up to it; the leading file then moves forward

while the rear file lies down with rifles loaded and sighted, ready to fire at once to cover the others if the enemy shows himself. If the locality to be searched can be outflanked, the leading files should move round one or both flanks before closing in on it. If it is one that cannot be outflanked, as, for instance, a straight edge of a large wood, they should approach it under cover, creeping up a hedgerow perhaps, and so get inside. If there is no cover they may try some ruse to draw the enemy's fire before getting too close, halting as if they had seen something, shading the eyes with the hand, pointing and then starting to run back as if alarmed, which might lead the enemy to open fire to prevent their escape. But it is rather hard to get men to do this play-acting unless there is a real force of "Blue" or "Red" enemy against them. The commander of the patrol, when approaching any place, should tell his men what they are to do if it is seen to be held by the enemy, i.e., to lie still and watch, or retire. If the latter, he should fix some place in rear where the patrol could rally after getting out of harm's way.

Show them how to look over a ridge, wall, or hedge, without attracting notice, taking off their headdress and raising the

head slowly, keeping the rest of the body carefully under cover, and also to move unseen, keeping in the shadow of hedges or roadside trees, and covering up any polished metal work of their uniform; to lie up on any place that commands a good view, and look long and carefully all over the country to catch sight of anything. Finally to report what they see, and to do this at once, if there is need, by sending one, or better, if the patrol can spare them, two men back to the piquet with a *written* report, the rest still remaining in observation. Without having an actual force opposing you, you can only do this exercise with some appearance of reality by giving out verbal situations to the patrol. Thus: "Go and reconnoitre that wood which an enemy may be holding." On this the patrol would get into formation and move forward. Then, when approaching the wood, "You have seen small parties of the enemy beyond the wood both on its right and left, and they are perhaps in the wood also; try and get into it unseen," if there is any cover, or, if not, "show what you would do to draw their fire before getting close." Then "the wood is held by the enemy, withdraw your patrol if you can." As the patrol attempts to retire "a heavy fire is opened on you as you retire, showing that

there is at least a company in the wood. your first duty is to send news of this to your piquet—how and whom would you send, and how would you frame your message?"

(d) Duties on piquet.—Close the platoon and take it to the place where the piquet is to be. A piquet on arrival at its position has at once to strengthen the position against attack, and this without waiting for orders (I.T., 151 (4)). But as we are here only training the non-commissioned officers in their duties we will not ask them actually to dig trenches or make loopholes and entanglements; indeed, this, as one may term it, executive work, has its proper place in "Defence." Bearing in mind, then, that we are dealing with a day outpost, ask or show the platoon how to strengthen the position. Bring out a few picks and let them spitlock on the ground the lines of any trenches that might be needed, paying great attention to the siting of the trench so that fire could be brought over all the ground in front. Let them indicate with exactness where and how they would improve and adapt existing cover. Great regard need not be had to the number of men in the piquet, as outposts, if attacked, should make as much show of force as possible, and it does good and not harm if there are alternative loop-

holes facing in different directions; also accommodation must be provided for the support. The commander should look for ground outside the outpost line from which enfilade rifle or artillery fire might be brought to bear on him, and mark how he would protect his men from it by traverses, breaking the line of loopholes into short lengths, keeping under lee of existing cover and so on. The strengthening of the piquet must be done with the aid of common-sense. It will seldom be enough to propose to dig one bit of trench all in one piece and hope the enemy will be good enough to come and knock his head against it. Cover may be made or adapted in several separate groups, if this is needed, so as to make it possible to bring fire to bear on any part of the ground in front. The piquet must be prepared to make as brave a show as possible, therefore the commander, while strengthening the point near which his piquet is to rest, must decide what he will do if attacked. Probably there will be within the limits of his piquet's frontage one or two other points which might be useful for defence, and he must not expect attack just from one direction. With regard to such alternative positions he should settle when and how he will use them, and whether he can afford time and

men to strengthen them, and, last but not least, whether he will be able to get men from one to the other if the enemy does develop a strong attack. If he can do all these he will have added immensely to his power of defence, provided he handles his men skilfully, as he will be able to hold one position till the enemy thinks he has defined its location, then dodge to another, while they will go on firing at the old one, and so make his piquet appear many times stronger than it is. Concealment of the defence is very important, and the non-commissioned officers should be reminded that this must be attended to. They may forget it as there is no actual digging.

(e) Duties in Piquet.—The position of the piquet and alternative defence positions having been fixed, and trenches or other defences marked out on the position, and on the alternative positions if any, assemble the platoon at the piquet and show the non-commissioned officers how to tell off reliefs and other duties. Each group furnished by the piquet consists of three to eight men, and mounts one or two men as sentry, as the circumstances of the post require (I.T., 152 (3)), the sentry, single or double, being relieved in turn by the others of the group. The whole group is under command of the senior soldier or

a non-commissioned officer. The men who are to form the reliefs of the groups stay with the piquet, which usually is composed solely of the reliefs of groups and patrols. Extra men who have no specific duties are not advisable unless the position is very exposed. Suppose your group sentries are single, and the groups of three men each, and relieved every eight hours, then for every group posted and in position there will be six men in the piquet resting and waiting their turn, each group thus needing a total of nine men—three out, six in. Patrols start from the piquet or support, as the commander of the company directs, and the piquet commander may send them out on his own initiative, if he thinks it needful. As they are practically all on duty as long as they are out, a turn of four hours is enough for them, or, rather, a third of the daylight time. Take your patrols from this piquet to be four strong, there will be for each patrol eight men in the piquet and four out on patrol, a total of twelve needed to furnish each patrol.

In telling off a piquet on the above conditions of relief, and before dismissing the men to rest, the commander must pay attention to two main points. Firstly, he must tell off the reliefs, and give each relief a place to rest in. Men on outpost are usually tired and need all the rest they

can get, especially if they are up all night. Therefore reliefs should be kept together and rest in one place, so that the commander can find them at once without stirring up the others to see who's who. Secondly, the men must be told off to alarm posts, which they are to occupy in case of attack—each relief and each man of it should be given a position on the entrenchment which he is to hold. To ensure that they will do this at once and without confusion they should be made to go to these places and occupy them before being dismissed. There will then be no needless running about with consequent casualties if fire, either of artillery or infantry, suddenly opens.

Say you have sixteen rifles (non-commissioned officers and others) in your instructional piquet give out that it is to furnish—

1 Sentry over the piquet.

2 Groups of three men each, Nos. 1 and 2.

2 Patrols of four men each, Nos. 1 and 2.

The sentry over the piquet alone being actually posted, the two groups and two patrols being supposed to be out in front, as this part of the lesson is only concerned with the inside work of the piquet, and you have already shown them this work on sentry and patrol. As your strength is not

sufficient you must make a further supposition, and make believe that for the reliefs of the groups one of your rifles represents three, and for those of the patrols one rifle represents two. Appoint one of the non-commissioned officers in turn as commander, and let him tell off accordingly.

- 3 Rifles for piquet sentry, one of whom he actually mounts.
- 1 Rifle (representing three) as second relief, No. 1 group.
- 1 Rifle (representing three) as third relief, No. 1 group.
- 2 Rifles (representing two each) for second relief, No. 1 patrol.
- 2 Rifles (representing two each) for third relief, No. 1 patrol.

And a similar number for No. 2 patrol and No. 2 group.

Having told off these reliefs the commander should then tell them where they are to have their resting places and where their posts are in case of alarm. At this time also he would give out any special orders which concern the piquet. Then without dismissing the men he should order them to go to their resting places, and as soon as they are there order them to occupy their alarm posts, which should be done in double time, the men lying down on the places that have been marked

out for entrenchment or improvement of existing cover. Make this falling in on alarm posts a standing order in the company. After this has been done, and each man knows exactly what he has to do on the alarm, the men should be dismissed to their resting places, which, as before said, should be separate for each relief and apart from each other. After being dismissed, the men would on service be allowed to make themselves as comfortable as possible. Other duties of the piquet commander are :—

- (1) The opening of communication with piquets in right and left and the support.
- (2) The fixing of places for purposes of nature.
- (3) The arrangements for getting up food to his men if they have not their rations with them.
- (4) Keeping his piquet in a state of readiness; besides keeping accoutrements on, the men should have their rifles at their sides when resting, and take them with them wherever they go. There should be no such thing as piling arms on outpost.

Night Piquets.

In the dark the bullet is a fool unless

fired at close quarters. No practicable amount of shooting, even at only a hundred yards distance, will dislodge determined men posted under cover, and a serious attack must be made with the bayonet or by shooting within the distance at which a man may be distinguished—ten yards or so. F.S.R., 138 (2), lays down for the British Army that the bayonet only is to be used in night attacks, and we may assume that any civilized army we may have to meet will pursue similar tactics. Aerial reconnaissance may nowadays allow an enemy to locate the position held by the main body of his opponent, in spite of its being covered by outposts, but such reconnaissance does not admit of any hope of a successful night attack being made on that main body by eluding or passing through the outposts, because the surface of the ground cannot be sufficiently searched from above to discover the small obstacles which must be avoided or known if the advance of a large body of men is to be carried out at night. So we may take it that now, as formerly, any large attack will fall first on the outposts, supposing, as we must, that these are placed so as to hold or watch all possible lines of advance. In addition to this, outposts must expect isolated attacks made against one or two

points held by them which the enemy desires to gain possession of. The duties of outposts by night are, then, to hold and defend the outpost line in sufficient strength to prevent any large body of the enemy breaking through, or getting a footing in some tactically important position on the line, and also to prevent the enemy's scouts from getting through and making observations, and, lastly, but of most importance, to get news of the enemy both as a means of forestalling any attack, and for the use of the force commander in framing his plans. Bringing the matter down to the level of a piquet of an outpost company, it seems to resolve itself into night patrolling and night defence of a position. As before pointed out, enclosed country allows of piquets closing the lines of advance by which large bodies can only hope to move undiscovered, while intervening ground can be searched by patrols. On the other hand, open country leaves the front vulnerable everywhere, and calls for a greater number of piquets and closer patrolling than are needed by day.

Of course, elementary instruction in these duties must be carried out by daylight to allow of supervision; so now assemble your platoon of non-commissioned

officers and give out that you are going to practise night work. Choose some place for your night piquet, realistic as may be, a bridge, a cutting, or anything else that constitutes a defile or otherwise blocks a likely line of advance from the enemy's direction. Also choose, and point out to the platoon, positions where the adjoining piquets on the right and left would be. Give out the following instructions to the non-commissioned officers:—

- (1) Piquets must take up their night positions when it is getting dusk, the strengthening of the piquet and construction of obstacles being done in advance, secretly if possible, and towards evening the working party should withdraw and leave the intended night position empty till it is time to move into it, further work being completed by twilight.
- (2) The provision of obstacles is more necessary than entrenchment, as securing the piquet from being rushed while completing the latter.
- (3) Men must rest on their alarm posts, and bayonets may have to be kept fixed by all, if there is a possibility of a sudden attack

(I.T., 151 (7)), to ensure instant readiness.

- (4) All piquets must stand to arms one hour before light and remain ready for action till the patrols have found that there is no sign of an immediate attack. When relief takes place in the morning, night outposts will not return to camp till the patrols report all clear.

After this, let the non-commissioned officer in command withdraw the piquet from its day position and march it to the night position. On arrival ask the non-commissioned officers in turn where they would place the piquet exactly and where they would put their obstacles. Obstacles for a night piquet should be under close fire, i.e., ten or twenty paces, but, in addition, booby traps and alarms may be placed further in front. Barbed wire is the best of all obstacles. The actual defensive measures to be taken do not differ from those taken for the defence of any position not on outpost.

The position of the piquet and obstacles being decided on, let the non-commissioned officers mark on the ground the actual work they would undertake, having regard to the time available, which you should tell them, and, on the same lines

as for the day piquet, let them as commanders in turn divide the men into reliefs of sentries and patrols, tell them off to their alarm posts, and order them to occupy them once as if on alarm.

A piquet by night, no matter how well entrenched, has a very limited field of action. Even with most carefully arranged night rests for the men's rifles its fire effect is small except at close ranges, and to resist attack by relatively larger bodies it must in general keep behind its defences. Hence a well organised scheme of patrols is necessary to supplement the passive opposition which the piquet can offer. The patrols are charged with the duty of bringing news of any advance of the enemy to attack, and, if he is close enough, of spying out his movements on and within his outpost line, of preventing his patrols or scouts penetrating their own line, of watching any localities which are of particular importance and unoccupied by piquets, such, for example, as villages beyond the outpost line which the enemy might try to occupy by night, and, lastly, of keeping up communication between the various bodies of the outposts. The strength of patrols is limited by the necessity of their being able to do this work without making a noise, and a strength of three to eight men is advised. A patrol performs its duty of ob-

servation either by going from point to point, or by watching one particular place, when it is called a "standing patrol." If a piquet posts any group sentries by night, away from the piquet, such groups have just the same work as standing patrols, except that they may be ordered to maintain their position in case of attack as they are near support, whereas patrols would fall back as soon as they had made sure the enemy was advancing, and possibly, if in accordance with their instructions, after treating him to a short burst of rapid fire. An ordinary patrol will also have to halt and listen perhaps for long periods, and so becomes for the nonce a standing patrol.

Form up the platoon at the piquet position, and let the commander tell it off into three patrols to practise this duty, disregarding reliefs, all three to be sent out at the same time in different directions, one man in each to be commander. Before they start off, tell them the following, which piquet commanders must see to:—

- (1) If there is no countersign published for the force, piquet commanders must arrange either a word or a sign by which men may know their own side in the dark.
- (2) Patrols going out are to tell the nearest sentry which way they are going (I.T, 156 (5)).

- (3) For patrols a code of signals should be arranged, e.g., a hiss or half-whistle, to call attention, answered by the same to show that the man called has heard it, followed by the signal, whatever it is :—a double hiss for "come up to me," a click of the tongue for "retire," but anything will do provided it cannot be clearly heard much further off than the listeners for whom it is intended, and is neither a very common nor a very uncommon sound.
- (4) The piquet commander must tell patrols how long they are to stay out and any places he thinks must be visited, in addition to what they themselves may find advisable, on closer acquaintance with the ground.

A suitable formation for a night patrol of six men would be four in the advanced party, followed at ten to fifty paces by the rear party or two. The reason for the stronger party being ahead is, firstly, that fighting at night begins with suddenness and ends rapidly, while reinforcement of one party by another is slow and uncertain, and, secondly, to ensure that some part of the patrol may have a good chance of getting away with news, whatever hap-

pens to the rest. Bayonets should be fixed and rifles sloped on the right shoulder, the right hand holding the small of the butt so as to come to the charge at once, and not to have any chance of a rifle falling on the ground.

Tell patrol commanders to get their patrols into formation and practise movement in silence along a road and on ordinary road. If along a road, let them move on each side of it, off the metal on the roadside grass or dust, and under trees or close to the hedge or wall. On ordinary country the ball of the foot should be put down first as if to feel the surface before putting the full weight of the body on the advanced foot. A stick or broom-handle, *à la* "boy scout," is invaluable in moving over unexplored ground, as by it the real nature of objects dimly seen at one's feet can be made out, and awkward spills thereby avoided. The movement of patrols under these conditions will be very slow over any but quite level ground. As the patrols move let them practise the code of signals, halting, advancing, coming up into one line, etc., also the keeping up of communication by one file moving back and forward between the two parts of the patrol. They should practise also breaking up and scattering as if attacked by overwhelming numbers, each individual

getting away as quickly and quietly as possible, and the whole rallying again at some place in rear. The patrol commander as he goes out must fix these rallying places, usually one is enough over the whole of a patrol's beat, and they should be *outside* the outpost line. Have the patrols moved so that on their beats they may meet each other once or twice, and use the sign to reply when challenge is made. As a second practice, direct one of the meeting patrols to consider itself hostile, and let the commander of the other patrol excogitate how he would deal with men who did not stand fast on being told to halt and could not give the countersign.

Next tell the patrols to get into position to watch various localities, a farm steading, a ravine, or such like, as they would have to do for limited periods as patrols reconnoitring on their beats, or for the whole night as standing patrols. One of the best ways in which patrols can fulfil their office is by halting and listening with ears near the ground for sounds of human movement. There is no rule for thus lying up except that they must not get caught themselves. A couple of men should be left quite clear of the patrol to get away if the others strike trouble, and the commander of the patrol should have word passed to these two from time to time that all is well with

the rest, or they may wait in their place while the others have been quietly downed.

Lastly, let patrols return to the piquet, and learn how to approach without getting themselves fired on, or causing useless alarm. A good way is for two of the patrol to advance a few steps at a time when near the piquet, halting and quietly code-signaling the piquet sentry till they get his attention and warn him that the patrol wants to come in.

It has taken longer to write about outposts than it may take you to put your men through them, and I have purposely been discursive because a knowledge of what is needed from outposts is more important than any set exercise, and also because this duty is the one which newly raised troops are most likely to perform negligently, and at the same time the one which, if neglected, allows the enemy to bring raw troops to quick demoralisation. I have also purposely written as if unlimited ground were available, and, speaking generally, I think it is. You can, and should, practise your piqueting and patrolling on the ordinary countryside, with its main and bye-roads, paths, fields, and hedges. The practice of outposts when piquets are not entrenched, causes no damage, so that leave to move over the fields should not be

hard to get, but even if it cannot be got, the principal and most important work of patrolling and watching all roads and paths, will be done on the ground on which they would be done on service. If fighting ever takes place in Britain, which Heaven forefend, outpost lines will be along the ordinary country and not on Salisbury Plain, so do not go into wild and desolate places for your outposts, but take the ordinary country round where you are.

EXERCISE XV.

DEFENCE.

The subject of defence is treated of in F.S.R., 107-110, I.T., 125-135, and in Chapter VII., M.F.E., 1911. The duties required of the company commander and his subordinates are briefly defined by I.T., 132, to be similar to those they carry out in the attack. The whole spirit of the regulations is that the active Defence is merely a means to an end, viz., the ultimate assumption of the offensive, which may be carried out either by the same troops which have acted on the defensive or by fresh troops detailed for the purpose. In both cases the troops that have acted on the defensive must be ready to become the aggressors. Therefore, in training your men, you should keep this constantly in view and conserve a spirit of aggressive mobility. Men must not be allowed to think that once a position has been taken up and entrenched it is to be their location till fighting ceases; on the contrary, they should be encouraged to look for opportunities while still on the defensive, to occupy alternative positions which

will make the task of the attacking enemy more difficult. Quickness in seizing and strengthening a position must be combined with mobility in leaving it to take up and strengthen a new one. Of course, the time available regulates the work that can be undertaken (M.F.E., VII. (2)); deep trenches and concealed head cover cannot be made with an enemy pressing in to assault, but the first requirement is the ability to choose positions that give a good field of fire and to strengthen them as thoroughly as the time available and the proximity of the enemy admit.

In dealing with a company, the onus of choosing what localities it is tactically necessary to occupy and strengthen rests with the company commander, subject to the orders of his battalion commander. In the same way as on outpost, you will be given a bit of ground to defend, either acting with the battalion or as an isolated company, and the rest will be on your head. I do not propose to deliver a treatise on the tactical occupation of ground, but instead I will ask you to procure and read two books. The first is "The Defence of Duffer's Drift," by Backsight Forethought (W. Clowes and Sons), the second is "A Staff Officer's Scrap Book," by Sir Ian Hamilton

(Edward Arnold). They are both most readable books, and are quite free of soporific effects. The first is small, and deals with the efforts of a half-company, under Lieutenant B. F., to defend a drift over a South African river. In the second the author takes you along with him through the Russo-Japanese War, of which he was a privileged spectator, and in your journeyings you look on at victories and defeats in the making, while the causes that led to them, great and small, are set forth, along with many shrewd comments on human nature and how it translates itself in the day of battle. Every fight bears its own lesson of what to do and what not to do in defence, and this told in no pedantic strain, but with the saving grace of humour, to mitigate the darker side of human carnage. Read them both, get to yourself the wisdom and understanding with which they are filled, and you will know how to take up a position for defence.

Having educated yourself to choose the points of a defensive position that must be occupied if the position is to be effectively held, you have still to train your men to the work of defending them, and they must learn to be able to do without the help of a supervising officer, as will often be the case on service.

Daylight defence is almost entirely a matter of fire, the immediate object being to make it impossible for the enemy to come to close quarters. Platoon and section commanders then must be able to dispose their men with this in view to the best advantage within the limits of the ground allotted to their units, and the men must be able to site their trenches or whatever form of cover has to be constructed so as to use their rifles to the best effect. It is no good to teach men to dig trenches and make loop-holes unless they know the proper places for them. (M.F.E., 18 (7)).

At the same time, practice in digging and the use of tools is very necessary for men who are not accustomed to such work. The hands of the untrained man blister and his muscles tire under the unusual effort, while he expends much energy with results small in comparison with what he can accomplish once he has learnt to use his strength well. Moreover, a certain amount of technical skill is required in making any but the most simple cover.

To practise the execution of work, you *must* have ground which you are at liberty to turn up, as well as some materials for loop-holes and obstacles. These may not be obtainable at any and every parade, but you can give practice in the selection and siting of trenches on any bit of

country without causing damage, the men merely spitlocking or marking with stones or anything else the position of the trenches on the surface of the ground, and describing what they propose doing.

I would, therefore, advise that you make your training consist of two parts, firstly the siting of trenches and the planning by unit commanders and men of defensive work, the choice and occupation of alternative positions, and the assumption of the offensive from the defensive, all this without actually breaking ground, and, secondly, ground and tools being then available, the performance of a course of making real cover and obstacles.

But the first part cannot be carried out unless the men have a knowledge of what trenches, loop-holes and so on are like, and the objects with which they are made. In a company of raw recruits taken from the populace at large, there will be plenty who have no ideas on the subject at all. You must then precede your exercises either by a short lecture, materials for which you will find in plenty in the "Defence of Duffer's Drift," and the manuals of training, or, better than a lecture, by showing them specimens of entrenchments made by regular troops. The main points to insist on are the securing of a field of fire, the necessity of concealment of the defences,

the importance of head cover as a help to the delivery of an accurate fire by letting men keep the enemy in view without showing up themselves, the avoidance of enfilade fire by making traverses, or by taking advantage of intervening high ground, the provision of cover from downward shell fire by making the trenches deep and steep enough to let men stand close up to the edges, and, in the case of isolated posts and points held as pivots of a position, the necessity of preparing an all-round defence so that these pivots will be able to continue fighting whatever happens on the intervening ground. The course of work actually performed for the second part should include digging all kinds of trenches, by which the men will learn to use their tools to the best advantage, and their hands and muscles will become hardened, the use of the excavated earth to form parapets and paradoss (cover from fire from the rear of the trench; forty inches of earth are needed to keep out a bullet), the drainage of trenches, the making of traverses against enfilade fire, the making of loop-holes and head-cover with the aid of all sorts of materials, sand bags, brushwood and heather, straw and twigs, stones and bricks (which must be covered with earth to deaden the effects of splinters), packing boards, and so on,

the concealment of trenches and loop-holes so as to be invisible to the enemy (this is of great importance), the masking of loop-holes when not in use to prevent light showing through, the making of dummy trenches and loop-holes to draw the enemy's fire away, the improvement of existing cover, such as loop-holing walls and the use of hedges with or without ditches, making sangars, if stones are available, the making of obstacles of barbed and plain wire, and measuring and marking of ranges round a position, which should be done by some means not obvious to the enemy, and clearing the field of fire. It will seldom be practicable to obtain subjects for practical demonstration of some of the latter in peace time; people will object to their walls being experimented on or their shrubberies laid low, and so even here a description of the method will have to be substituted for actual performance. For night defence the construction of night rests for rifles is needed. The best I know is a packing case, filled with earth, with the front and rear edges notched to hold the rifle stock. The magazine is laid hard up against the outside of the rear edge and the notches, front or rear, slowly deepened with a pen-knife till the sights bear on the target; afterwards earth is banked up outside the

box and head-cover made above. The foregoing may seem a formidable list, but they are things that will undoubtedly be required as soon as you get on shooting terms with an enemy; while if you exhaust this list and feel the want of further occupation, the Engineering Manual will supply you with further subjects for your activities.

Pending your getting facilities of ground, tools, and materials to execute work, you can proceed with the first part of training outlined above. If your non-commissioned officers have not had experience, take them out as an instructional section in the same way as when teaching outpost work, and put them through the exercises which follow. But if they are already fairly competent, take the men on parade, forming them, if possible, into not less than two sections.

Instruction in Siting Trenches.

Choose any position on undulating ground, form the men in extended order in one line in rear of it, and order them to move up, and mark where each would place his trench in order to fire on an enemy advancing from the front. In doing this it should be an invariable rule that men must lie down, bring the rifle into

the firing position, look along the sights, and move forward or back till they see that they have got the best position to sweep the ground in their immediate front (see M.F.E., 31 (3)). Dead ground close to the trench gives the enemy a place in which to collect and organise an assault. Take the men in the same way on to other positions and repeat the lesson till they all understand that the *first thing to be done is this aiming with the rifle to secure a good field of fire*. At first halt them close to what you see is the best line, and afterwards halt them thirty or forty yards from it, and then give the order to choose sites. For instance, halt them on the top of a convex slope and let them find out that the best place to bring fire on to flat ground at its base is somewhere on the enemy's side of the convexity, for if the trench were made on the top of the slope the ground immediately in front would be hidden by the convexity. The section commanders must help the men in choosing sites.

After the men have fixed and marked the proposed sites, let them lay down their rifles three paces in rear and kneel or lie down at the rear edge of the site as if waiting to commence work while you and section and platoon commanders go round and examine the line. Ask details from

the men—how high they would make the parapet, how thick it should be, how they would make head-cover, how they would conceal the work, and so on.

Traverses and broken lines of Trenches.

Repeat the exercise as above, but this time have the men in sections or small groups, and the trenches made not in one line, but in short lengths, separated by traverses. You will have to explain the construction and use of these to prevent enfilade fire (if not from long range), and to localise shell bursts. Again, have lines of trenches mapped out in short lengths on an irregular front, some a little forward, some a little back, with the earth at each end, banked up on the flanks with the same object (M.F.E., 33).

Short Trenches for Two Men.

Bring the men extended to six or eight paces on to a position, and let the men of each file close to two paces from each other. Each file is then to choose and mark a site for a short trench to hold both of them, or, as it would formerly have been called, a rifle pit, marking where they would make loop-holes to fire both to the front, and obliquely towards the right and left, so as to rake the ground

in front of the line of the other men's pits. This arrangement is not officially recognised, and it does not give the closest possible firing line, but it is an excellent way of making men think for themselves.

When the men have got their bearings in the matter of taking up a line for entrenchment, make them get into the way of changing from defence into attack. Take up a position as before, and as soon as the trenches are marked out, indicate a position at some distance as an objective for attack and start an advance against it, as done in the attack practices, forming a firing line rapidly of some named platoons and the support of the others. A skeleton enemy kept hidden till needed adds much to the realism.

Defence of Pivots (M.F.E., 50 (3), and I.T., 129).

Find a position in which there are some points separated from each other which command the ground between, and also form such pivots for defence of the position as are described in the paras. above. According to the nature of the ground, such pivots might be, for platoons, as much as four hundred yards apart, i.e., attackers coming between them would be under fire at not more than two hundred yards. Send a platoon under a

commander to each pivot, and let him plan and mark out his defensive measures, which must include :—

1. An arrangement for all-round defence, so that the pivot may be self-contained and capable of continuing the fight, although others may have been captured.
2. The siting accordingly of trenches and loop-holes to fire all round and especially to sweep the front and rear of adjoining pivots.
3. The adaptation of existing cover to save labour.
4. The provision of protection against enfilade and reverse fire, and the *recognition of distant localities* from which such fire, whether of artillery or rifle, might be brought to bear on the post.
5. The marking of ranges in each direction.
6. The provision of obstacles.
7. Any feasible scheme for alternative positions which his men could reach and occupy under fire.
8. The concealment of the defences, provision of dummy trenches, and loop-holes and any other shifts.

9. The telling off and posting of look-out men and fixing and occupying of alarm posts when work has been completed.
10. Drainage and sanitation.

The concealment of defences from aerial reconnaissance will, perhaps, soon claim more attention than it gets at present.

Practise an attack after defence, starting off one platoon under your own orders to "go for" an indicated enemy, and sending word either by messenger or by semaphore to the others, either to join you and form a firing line, or to move out in support, but, if the latter, do not fail to finally call them up to reinforce the firing line; counter-attacks must usually be made with a relatively strong firing line and small support.

The Company in Defence Acting Alone.

When you have put non-commissioned officers and men through the preceding course, plan some scheme on the lines of the defence of Duffer's Drift, to deal with a company isolated and beyond reach of immediate reinforcement. Any bridge over a railway line, a group of buildings supposed to contain stores, or a ford or bridge over a river, will provide you with an object to defend. Choose a line of

defence round it and determine what are the essential pivots to be held. To do this, so as to furnish an instructive lesson, it will usually be necessary for you to pay a visit to the place by yourself and formulate your proposed defence before bringing the company on to the ground. Pay great attention to crossing and supporting fire from the pivots, and look at the surrounding country with a view to meeting attack from any direction, for in this case the company, as well as the pivots in its line of defence, must be self-contained. Also have regard to the certainty that you will have artillery fire against you, to which you will not be able to reply, and in consequence your proposed defences must include deep trenches or recesses to shelter the men from shell. Your defences will take the form of a chain of isolated groups about the point to be defended and separated from each other by possibly several hundred yards. It is no use simply to go, and sit inside a group of buildings which the guns would knock about your ears and against which the enemy can concentrate. The better plan is to break up his attack and hide your weakness by occupying well-strengthened pivots, behind whose protection you may have some freedom of movement, and so be able, if the weakness or rashness of

the enemy gives opportunity, to inaugurate local counter-attacks. These, if successful in inflicting a sharp and sudden loss, will make him hesitate to deliver a decisive attack till he has found out all about you. With one company you cannot expect to achieve decisive results against any considerable body of the enemy, but must be content with keeping him in play for as long a time as possible, and an attitude of active bluff is the best means of doing so.

When you have got your plans completed, take out the company as strong as possible and complete in its proper platoons and sections—if there are too few men let one man count for two or three. Send off platoons to occupy and plan the defence of the pivots as done when practising it before. Do the same scheme on two separate occasions. The first time do not send out a skeleton enemy, so that the men may have time to look round, but for the second time send out some scouts under a subaltern, and let the platoons fall out on their positions with patrols out in front. Fix a certain hour by which you expect the arrangements to be all ready, and arrange for the enemy to advance at that time, and open fire on the patrols if they are met. When the patrols have fallen back the enemy closes in and starts

sniping at the position. Then bring off a counter-attack, withdrawing some men for the purpose from pivots that are not threatened, and coming in on the flank of the attackers. In theory, of course, you should have a support or reserve available for this, but it does no harm to move men out of their trenches with the object of assuming the offensive, while the men learn the essential part of their work by all being employed on the perimeter.

Have out the company yet a third time on the same or a similar scheme, pivots and skeleton enemy as before. On this occasion, if the scheme is the same, change round the platoons to different pivots from what they occupied before, and when the arrangements for defence have been settled, leave only sentries and their groups on the pivots as look-outs, but have patrols in front. Form the remainder of the men into a support in some central position, and tell them off to occupy as alarm posts the pivots from which they were withdrawn. When the skeleton enemy attacks, reinforce the threatened part of the line by the men of the units told off for its defence, and with part, or even the whole of the rest, make a counter-attack.

It is very desirable, though unfortunately not often possible, to perform these last three practices on ground where you are at

liberty to dig, and with an enemy of three or four companies instead of a few snipers.

Night Defence.

A night attack may be delivered as a sequence to fighting by daylight, in the course of which the enemy has established himself sufficiently close to the defences held by his opponent to see clearly the way to reach the point against which he intends to lead his force. Or he may deliver an attack without previous fighting, hoping to get the better of the defenders by surprise, and basing his plans solely on the results of reconnaissance. In the latter case the attack must be preceded by a night advance, long or short, according as the defenders' outposts and their patrols have succeeded in keeping the hostile troops at a distance or not, unless, indeed, the troops or their scouts or spies have not been in touch at all during the day in which case an attack would not be a wise proceeding, because the needful information about the ground and your forces is lacking. Such attacks as require a night advance as a preliminary are likely to be made either over open ground or along roads, for the difficulties and delays occasioned by moving troops over broken ground which is not thoroughly known are

very great. But in the first case, when fighting has been going on by day, and the two forces are in close contact at night-fall, separated perhaps by only a few hundred yards, the presence of broken ground in front of the defences is no guarantee that the enemy may not consider an attack by night to have a reasonable chance of succeeding against any of the points which he has been trying to carry by daylight. It follows then that in preparing a position for defence the pivots must be ready to withstand attack by night as well as by day, and also that roads or paths leading into the position from the surrounding country should be held and defended by night, in spite of their being innocuous by daylight owing to being swept effectively by fire from the adjacent pivots. It will be admitted, I think, that fire by night is ineffectual unless at very short ranges, or when delivered by men of extraordinary skill such as the up-country Boer and the American backwoods-men were pictured to be. A European enemy will seek to bring off his attack with the bayonet. The defenders will try to foil this attack, firstly, by the use of fire at the close range, which allows it to be effective, and, secondly, by the use of the bayonet. This plainly translates itself into obstacles to keep the enemy under fire, obstacles to hamper him

when at bayonet distance, and night rests to help the accuracy of the fire in certain desired directions. I have told you one good form of night rest, and there are several others, but all require some material if they are to be even approximately accurate. Failing material of any sort, tie white rags round the muzzles of the men's rifles if you can get them. After a week in the field your men will have nothing that is not very dirty, but in a civilised country some member of the population may perhaps be found ready to oblige a soldier.

Working still on your daylight scheme show your non-commissioned officers and men how to make night obstacles in addition to those meant for daylight defence, which latter may be any distance up to one hundred yards in front of the trenches. The night obstacles, on the other hand, should be quite close, the fire obstacles as close as ten yards, the bayonet obstacles, say a narrow ditch and a wire, close under the trenches so as to make a man stumble when trying to reach the defender with his bayonet. Make or plan these arrangements round the pivots, and then practise blocking and defending paths or roads by the same methods as for pivots, but with this variation, that a parapet which can only be used for defence at night may be as high as you consider needful without

paying regard to its invisibility, while those to be used by day are kept as low as possible. In a practical exercise the men to hold these night posts would have to be furnished either from your support or by thinning some of the pivots.

Yet the most carefully arranged trenches and obstacles will be of no value unless the men occupy them in time to avail themselves of their advantages. Time sufficient to allow of this must be got by patrolling in front as for outposts, by making automatic alarms in front of the obstacles (M.F.E., 55 (12)), by having alert sentries on the defence line, and by having a good and well understood arrangement of alarm posts by which each man shall be ready to occupy at once, in silence, and without confusion, the place which has been assigned to him. Patrolling has been dealt with under "Outposts," the alertness of your sentries will depend largely on the state of discipline to which you have brought your company, and on the commonsenseness, to coin a word, of their training. Alarm posts are practised in the same way as on outpost. In many corps it is a standing order that when in camp or bivouac, on manœuvre as well as on service, men are to fall in on their alarm posts once a day, the usual times being at retreat or on arrival in camp (F.S.R., 48

(2)), and this is done whether in Brigade (F.S.R., 47 (2)) or not. If such is the order in your battalion, adhere to it within your company when detached, if not, do it off your own bat. It does not fatigue the men and ensures attention being paid on all occasions to this important duty.

EXERCISE XVI.

HASTY EXPEDIENTS.

I.T., 93 (iii.), directs the training of the section to include rough and ready expedients so as to form a fighting front in any direction. This training is of great value, both from a disciplinary point of view, as it makes men quick to move on an order, and also from the point of view of *moral*, as men accustomed to get sudden and unexpected orders given under imaginary circumstances will be more likely to keep cool, when such orders are necessitated by the stress of actual battle, than men who have always been trained in a deliberate fashion.

Such sudden orders must in general mean one of two things, either that the enemy has got you, or you have got him, "on the hop," if I may introduce an expression from the cricket field, and that there is every chance of the bowler, whoever he is, being badly scored off, unless he treats the batsman to something more difficult than the expensive half-volley. If you are fortunately able to find the enemy at a disadvantage, you will act

against him by rifle fire alone ; but, on the other hand, you may find yourself caught in a bad situation, by either artillery or rifle fire, or possibly by cavalry, who mean to use the steel. It follows then, in practising expedients, based, as they should be, on some possible situation, that you should make the central idea either offensive, as if attempting to bring your men into a position to get the best results from their fire, or defensive, as if to escape, or mitigate shell fire or rifle fire, to which you are subjected under adverse conditions.

Against artillery fire from ranges or in positions at which you cannot reply effectively with rifle fire, your action at first, at all events, must be purely defensive, i.e., all you can do, will be to escape being overwhelmed by the shell fire, and even at effective rifle range, the shields of modern field guns, enable them to engage infantry on very equal terms, so long as the infantry is in front, or not far on a flank, of the line of guns.

In the days of muzzle-loaders, it was the cavalry who possessed the power of suddenly annihilating infantry, when caught unprepared to withstand their charge. The magazine rifle has reduced this danger, but the quick-firing cannon has now equal, if not greater, powers of

dealing out swift destruction to any infantry that it finds exposed in close formation, if only the range be known. At least once in the Russo-Japanese War, and again in the Turko-Bulgarian war, if we may believe the somewhat ill-authenticated reports yet to hand, have artillery wiped out of existence in a few moments several hundred unfortunate infantrymen, who were caught in the *rafâle* fired at a range either ascertained previously, or got at the moment by good luck or good judgment. The contingency of being thus caught by artillery is evidently one that should be prepared for by infantry, as was the forming of squares in the old days, when a cavalry charge was an ever present peril. In this case of artillery fire, the conditions and the object desired are practically always the same—the infantry is in close order of some sort, and wishes to break up into a congeries of small groups, so as to isolate the effect of the burst of each shrapnel. The matter of rifle fire is different, as there are any number of ways in which you may seek either to escape the results of the enemy's fire or attempt to use your own, and this is the proper field in which to practise expedients.

Whenever you intend to carry out some such movement to meet a supposed situation, you must let the men know exactly

what you are picturing, so that they also may understand what is needed. The essence of these practices is that they should be performed without time for deliberate thought—the men must learn to think and act quickly. The most satisfactory way is to be yourself mounted, as you can then get the whole company to hear you at once, whereas, if on foot, the men who are farthest from you often lose the first part of what you say; you then have to repeat it, and the thing loses its character of surprise for the rest, who have already heard it once. Give out the situation in a loud voice, and in as few words as possible, then try and give the very order you think you would give, if the situation was a real one on service; use your own imagination, in figuring what you would say, and how you would say it. To call attention, it seems legitimate to use your whistle, as on service the men would have some warning that things were about to happen, either by the arrival of shell or bullets, the sight of the enemy, or by the signal of their own scouts. In giving the situation, if you are receiving fire, give out what kind of fire it is, the enemy's position, if it is allowable to suppose it known, or if you are going to be on the offensive, give out where the enemy is, and what he is doing, and how you learn this, i.e., by your

scouts, or by first-hand observation. For example, while the company is marching in fours along a road, you see, in imagination, two shells burst simultaneously near by, and about two hundred yards from each other, and you wisely deduce that the enemy is ranging on your company. Blow your whistle and give out "Artillery fire is opening on the company, from such and such a direction—open out to columns of sections." If you have taught your men what to do to escape artillery fire, they will open out at the double into columns of platoons, at not less than fifty yards interval, measuring roughly at right angles to the direction of the supposed fire (I.T., 118 (3)).

In practising this opening out under artillery fire, which, as I have said, is the one specific hasty manœuvre performed under conditions nearly always similar, it is inexpedient to lay down any fixed rules for the positions to be taken up by the platoons. It sounds simple to say that the platoons of the leading half-company go to the right, and those of the rear half to the left, but when men are marching at ease, and shells begin bursting round them unexpectedly, I do not think there will be time for anyone to see which half-company is leading. The main thing is to get the platoons instantly away

from the road on which the enemy has laid his guns, and from each other. Direct platoon commanders to lead their men at the double in any direction away from the platoon in front, except, of course, towards the rear. In theory, of course, this might result in all four making out towards one flank, but, even so, this is better than having any deliberative halts on the road, and in practice the platoons in rear can see which way those in front are heading, and wheel to go to the other flank. There is no advantage to be had from getting the men in the ranks into extended order, as the shrapnel scatter the whole width of their bursting zone in an impartial manner, nor is it any use to seek such slight cover as gives only a screen from view, unless with a view to getting away from the shell-swept locality without attracting notice. Platoon commanders should, of course, make for any cover that is sufficiently steep on the rear side to shelter them from the downward dropping shrapnel bullets. If there is no cover, the best thing after getting out into the line of platoons separated by fully fifty yards intervals, is to move rapidly forward. If cover exists with open ground round it, the men may be got away by "dribbling" man by man, in the hope that the enemy may not spot the movement, and continue or resume his shell practice, to defeat it.

As regards expedients against rifle fire, I will only suggest a few, and leave you to invent others suited to the nature of the ground you have got to exercise on.

1. The company in close order is surprised by a heavy rifle fire ; there is cover near by sufficient to hold the whole company crowded together. Order the men to get into the cover helter skelter, and then advance or retire, by the successive movement of platoons or sections, who take extended order at their best speed as they emerge from shelter. If facilities exist, tell one or two platoons to reply to the fire, from the cover, till their own turn comes to move, by which time the first lots that went out should have got into position to open fire.
2. The company in close order is again surprised by rifle fire, but there is no cover near to act as a base. Get the company quickly into extended order, and let men reply to the fire as soon as they have extended, using studiously slow fire.
3. The company or platoons in extended order have to change front to meet an attack from a flank,

As in the book, call on them to line a hedge or ditch, facing so as to fire in the new direction.

4. Coming through a gap in a hedge or wall, either in advance or retreat, scattering off right and left, so as to get out of the way of fire concentrated on the gap.
5. The scouts from a position some distance from the company report a body of the enemy unaware of their presence and exposed to fire. Bring the company quickly up to the scouts' position, halt, load, and adjust sights under cover and just short of the firing position, and on your whistle the men advance at once to the edge of the fire position and surprise the enemy by a simultaneous fire from all the rifles.
6. Taking up quickly an all-round defensive position; the platoons or sections go off and find the best positions in different directions which you merely indicate roughly.
7. Hastily organised attacks, to dislodge an enemy unexpectedly found in occupation of a position, also taking up action as flank and rearguards under fire.

EXERCISE XVII.

NIGHT OPERATION TRAINING.

I.T., 113, gives some instructions as to how men are to be taught to march and to use their ears and eyes at night, while F.S.R., chapter ix., goes into the subject at length. These operations are divided into night marches, night advances, and night attacks. The men of a company will not be fit to take a useful part in night tactical exercises either in company or in battalion, unless they have had some elementary training as laid down in "Infantry Training," and have also been practised in the two indispensable duties of maintaining connection (F.S.R., 129 (4)) and in reconnaissance (F.S.R., 130 (1)). Night patrolling and the duties of night sentries have been dealt with under outposts, and I will not say anything more about them here. The rest of the elementary training contained in "Infantry Training" requires no explanation, and you can practise your men in it in small parties. There remains the maintenance of connection, and I have found that training for this is best done at first by daylight. It is very simple, and after one or two daylight

lessons the men will work quite well by night, but to begin straight off under darkness will only lead to waste of time, as mistakes cannot easily be corrected, nor the working of a system made plain. The company should parade as strong as possible in this exercise, as, with only a few files on parade, the necessity of maintaining connection, and the difficulty of doing so, are not so obvious as when a fairly large body of men has to be handled without making a noise. Connection has to be maintained within the company itself, and also with the other companies in front or rear, if in column of route, or on the right and left, if deployed. In order to practise this connection with other companies, represent the front and rear, or flank section commanders of the supposed adjacent companies by a man for each company, who should move where those section commanders would be, i.e., in fours, at the head or tail of the directing flank, in line, on the flanks of the front rank. Use these dummies as the recipients of all orders and signals passed along, so that your company may get the habit of keeping touch with the others before it works with the battalion.

I. Connecting Files.

The only sure way of keeping connection between bodies of troops moving in

separate parties is by connecting files, who keep within sight of each other and so can seldom be at more than twenty yards distance apart. These files must be taught to pass commands with exactitude, and never to open their mouths otherwise, i.e., they must never speculate between themselves "Are they advancing?" or so forth, or talk at all, because the next file may hear some word of their talk and mistake it for an order. When connecting files are needed they must take up their places without its being necessary to tell them off loudly, and when no longer needed they must close into company in silence and in good order.

Form the company into fours, turned to a flank as in column of route: tell the dummy section commander of the preceding company to march off; string the company out after him, the men marching off in files at about ten paces between each file without further command after the first one has gone, each as it moves off touching the next to follow, to give it notice. When they are all strung out, let the rear dummy section commander follow. Then pass orders up the line; use only the form given in I.T., 96 (3). To make sure that such verbal orders have reached the intended recipient, the only way, though a slow one, is to require him to send back a report that he has taken the action required. Thus, a

message from the rear to the leading portion to halt would be answered from the leading portion by a report passed down the line to the commander "The leading portion, or, etc., has halted." Let your first order be to halt, passed from the dummy company in rear up to that in front "From Colonel A. to all companies—halt." On receiving the order one man of each file halts on his ground and turns to the rear, the other goes forward to the next file as quickly as he can without noise, delivers the order, and returns to his former place, when he halts and faces the other way from his comrade. Thus, on the completion of the order to halt, one man of each file will be facing each way. Bayonets will usually be fixed in night operations, and it is important, especially in Rifle Battalions, to accustom men to carry the rifle on the right shoulder, with the hand round the small of the butt and never at the trail, otherwise there is much danger of someone getting a stab as well as an order.

After the halt, get on the move again by passing up the word to advance, and practise any other likely orders:—"Go fast in front," "Go slow in front," "The rear cannot keep up," and so on. Follow the orders up the line and see that men do not tamper with the form of the order en route, and that they speak in a whisper when giving

it over. Section and platoon commanders must be told all orders as they pass, see that their units conform, and look after the maintenance of the distance between files.

Next practise lateral communication, the four platoons in one line in close order, with company intervals between each, representing the leading platoons of four companies drawn up in line of columns of platoons at deploying intervals and ready for a night advance. Lateral connecting files need to be closer than when following each other, so put out connecting files to the flanks in a similar way to what was done before, but at six, or eight yards interval. Then move, halt, and deploy the supposed column by means of these files, dressing and interval being kept up by the files moving up or stepping short, and closing on or inclining from any named company of direction without specific orders.

II. Marching and Formations.

Form up the company and get it into fours as if in column of route, dummy company section commanders as before. Practise marching off from the halt, and halting, passing the word from the front or rear company along the men on the flanks of the fours. As the order comes along, the flank men of the fours nudge or

shove the other men in their respective fours, and whisper to the flank men in the four in front or behind. There is seldom any need to speak, as a push or pull is enough. The platoon commanders get the word from the flank men of the sections of fours, and from one another as well, as they are to follow the order along their own platoons, and go forward or back to the commander of the next platoon to whom they must repeat it, and then resume their proper places. The platoon commander of the leading, or rear, platoon is responsible for passing the word to the nearest platoon commander of the next company. The company officers must arrange also to hear all orders, and should have fixed positions, known to all, which they will only quit temporarily. In marching off from the halt, the rear portion of the company should step out well, as soon as the order reaches them, so as to avoid straggling, while the leading fours preserve a uniform pace. In halting in battalion, the leading fours should close up on the company in front, and continue to do so, till it is seen that it has finished closing up; there is always bound to be a good deal of straggling at first owing to the method of giving orders. When this system is in good working order, move and halt the company on your own

audibly whispered word of command, the platoon commanders repeating it, the system of communication being kept up as before, but the men moving at once on the word ; this will give a fairly simultaneous action throughout the company while ensuring against loss of touch.

On the same lines, practise forming line from column of platoons, mass, and column of platoons from column of fours, and marching in line, paying attention throughout to dressing and the covering of files in line.

III. Night Assault.

Choose a position as objective, and form the company, in line or in column of platoons, about three hundred yards from it, with scouts about eighty yards in front of the company (F.S.R., 137 (4)). This is the formation which would usually be adopted at the position of deployment. When the scouts have got about one hundred yards from the position, or up to a line which they would recognise in the dark as being in close proximity to it, they should halt, and wait for the arrival of the company. The whole then move silently forward towards the position till you give the word or signal for assault, when all charge. Practise this stealthy advance right on to the position, as if the enemy were not alert,

and also make the charge from some distance, as would be done if the enemy opened fire, which is recognised to be what will most often happen. After the assault the men should be rallied by the non-commissioned officers taking all men within their reach, and forming them into extemporised sections ready to be reformed into platoons and to begin entrenching.

If by chance you get material, you may introduce refinements, in the way of wire-cutting men with each section, sand bags with each man, and bags stuffed with straw carried ready to throw on to abatis or to fill up trenches, to be carried in a fixed place in the company.

IV. Night Entrenching.

Practise marching with arms and tools, and taking up a position to be entrenched, with especial regard to avoidance of noise. When entrenching by night, the trenches cannot be chosen to give a field of fire unless it has been possible to obtain access to the locality by day, and mark them in advance; failing this the company commander, as soon as the position is reached, must send patrols, and go himself, to ascertain that no commanding ground, at least in the immediate vicinity, has been left unoccupied, and, at the first light, all

other such points within effective range as it is possible to hold, should be secured and entrenched, without orders from higher commanders. A full illustration of this, however, can only be done by parading at night.

V. *Search Work.*

Practise the company in going off, as if detached from the column to get touch with other troops, or to find a gate or bridge by which some obstacle, wall, canal, etc., met with, can be passed. The company moves off dropping connecting files to keep touch with the halted column, the files halt at their distances, and pass word if the company has achieved its mission, and close on the company when the column comes up, but not before, else the column will be left out of touch; or, if the need has passed and the company is recalled to the column, the connecting files again remain at their posts till the company is gathered back on them.

VI. *Surprises.*

When only a few men are on parade, advanced education, combined with some amusement, may be got by experimenting in the best ways of laying out obnoxious persons, such as hostile patrols, who have to be rushed in silence (F.S.R.,

138 (5)). Before beginning a stalk, the quarry should be kept under observation to see which way he looks when halted, and any other idiosyncrasies. The assailant should creep up to him either on his flank, or from behind, moving one foot at a time, and bending down, though not on all fours. If the sentry looks his way, he must stay absolutely motionless, till he again looks away. My informant on this matter was a friend of a successful rifle thief in Upper India.

After putting the company through the above daylight course, you should, of course, put theory into practice and do some real night work whenever you get the chance, putting out a skeleton enemy or some observers to tell you how much noise you make, and follow out the full instructions as to orders, watchwords, etc., given in F.S.R., 138 and 139. Test your men as to their ability to see in the dark; some men can see much more than others; spot these men and tell them off as "Night Scouts." Even if they are not otherwise qualified as scouts, they are most useful in guiding the company over rough ground.

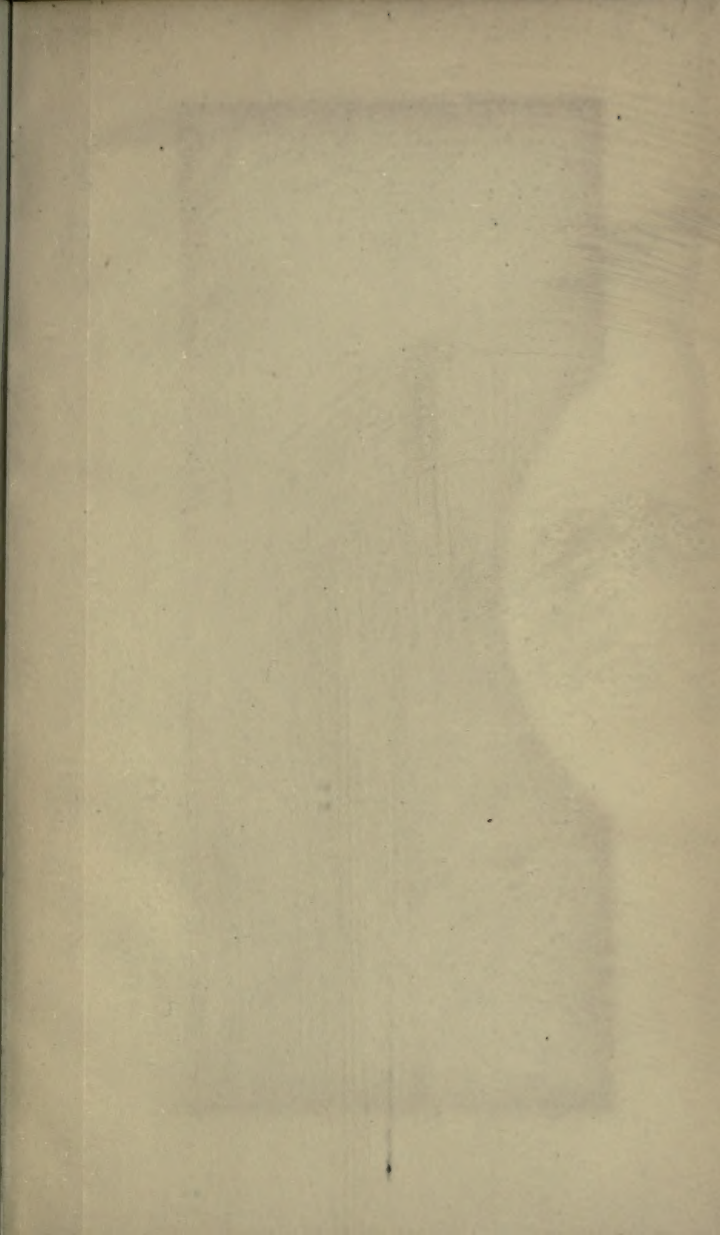
A SCHEME OF A COMPANY TRAINING.

I give below, as an example of the application of the foregoing exercises, a scheme of company training which I actually carried out. This was in the days before platoons, so I have altered the scheme to show what I should have done had the company organisation been what it now is. I was given from Monday in one week to Saturday the next week to march out into camp, about 10 miles, and get back, i.e., two days of march, and ten halted working days. I had thirty-five rounds per man of ball cartridge available for field practice musketry, and a sufficiency of blank for the requirements of skeleton enemy and for use with the men in one or two of the exercises. My men were Regulars, and during the previous furlough season I had grounded them piecemeal in field work.

DAY.		FORENOON WORK.	AFTERNOON WORK.
1	Monday	<p>March out to camp. March discipline and work of connecting files. Advanced guard. Sanitation. Water piquet and sanitary patrols. Pitched a perimeter camp as for savage warfare. Trenched tents against rain, and made a shelter trench round camp. Alarm posts.</p>	
2	Tuesday	<p>Individual advance in extended order. Retirement by pairs.</p>	<p>Improved and deepened camp entrenchments, made loop-holes night rests, and obstacles.</p>

DAY.		FORENOON WORK.	AFTERNOON WORK.
3	Wednesday	Platoon and Section in attack as part of Company.	Field practice Musketry :— Individual advance in extended order. 7 rounds ball per man.
4	Thursday	Platoon in independent attack.	Field practice Musketry :— Section in independent attack, 7 rounds ball per man
5	Friday	Platoon in retirement.	Preliminary training for Company attack. Fire discipline and control.
6	Saturday	Company in attack with the battalion.	Prepared target positions and markers butts for snap-shooting.

DAY.	FORENOON WORK.	AFTERNOON WORK.
7	Monday Company in attack with Battalion.	Snapshooting, 7 rounds per man.
8	Tuesday Company in attack acting alone.	Snapshooting, 7 rounds per man.
9	Wednesday Outposts.	Company in attack, 7 rounds ball.
10	Thursday Defence.	Company in retirement.
11	Friday Night attack Parade at 2.30 a.m.	Hasty expedients.
12	Saturday March back to quarters.	



TN.
Kir.

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